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GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS

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GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS



GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS

SCHOOL ADDRESSES
AT THE OPENING AND CLOSE OF TERM

BY

ANNA BUCKLAND

AUTHOR OF

"A RECORD OF ELLEN WATSON," "THE STORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE,"
"OUR NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS," ETC.

"A voice of Aspiration after Right,
A voice of Effort striving for the Best,
A voice of high Hope conquering Despair!"

London

PERCIVAL & CO.

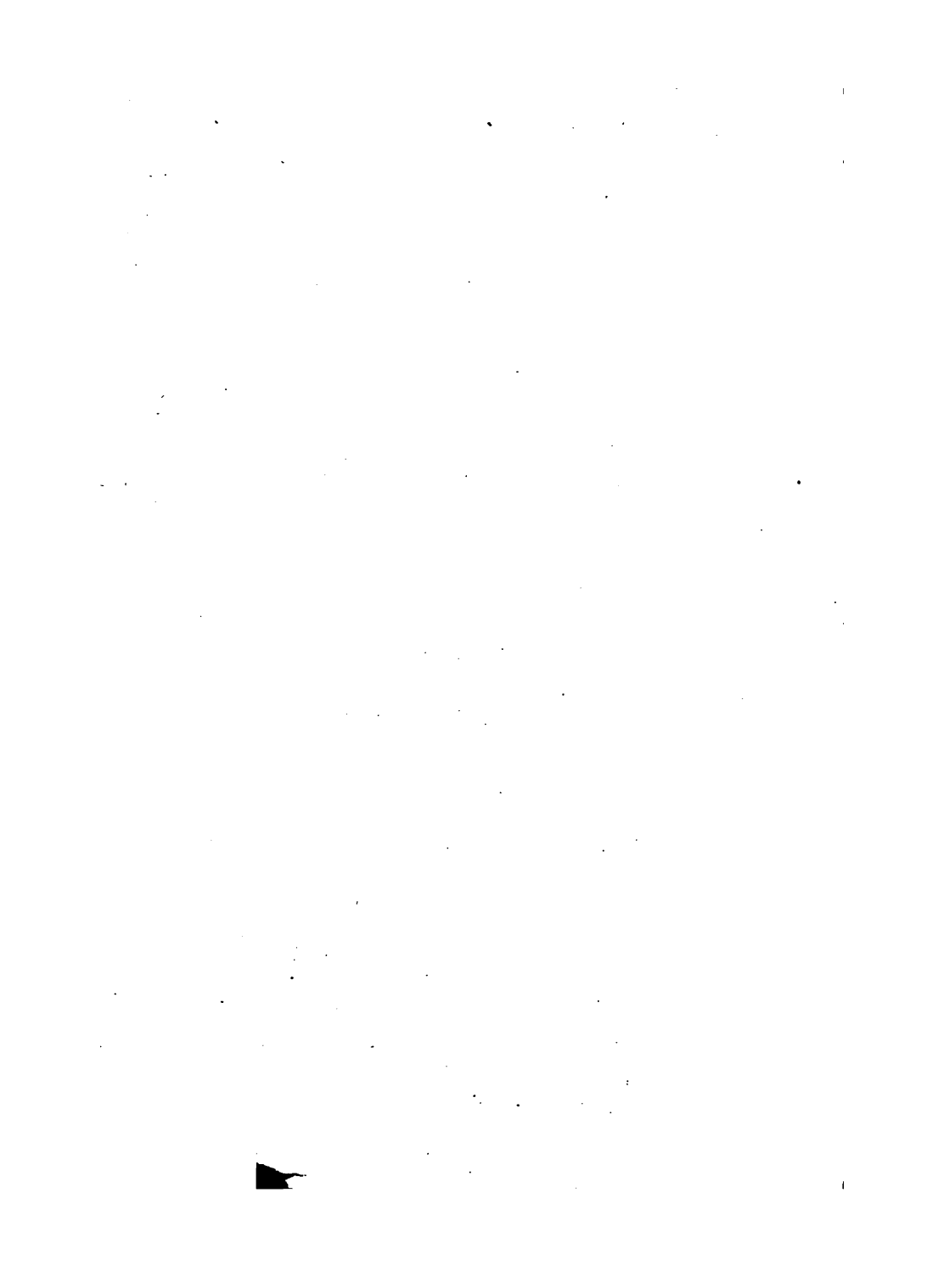
KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN

1891



TO
MY DEAR PUPILS,
AMONGST WHOM I HAVE SPENT SO MANY HAPPY
HOURS OF WORK AT BLENHEIM HOUSE AND AT WEST HEATH,
THESE GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS ARE DEDICATED,
WITH THE ASSURANCE OF THE ENDURING
LOVE AND INTEREST OF THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND,
ANNA BUCKLAND.

Re-classed 11-21-32 AJM



P R E F A C E

THESE little Addresses have been given from time to time at the opening and close of the School Terms ; and the wish has often been expressed, by old pupils and parents, as well as by those engaged in other spheres of education, that they should be preserved in some more enduring form. The plan of each Address has been to select some one great word, or short motto, which should contain in itself a single vital principle, essential to that growth of mind and development of character which are the objects of all education. The treatment of each subject is brief, and for the most part general rather than special, for the reason that special applications to present details have often only a temporary result in effects upon the outward life under the existing circumstances ; whereas all essential principles are agents in the continued development of the mind, and the building up of character throughout that whole process

of education, which, beginning with birth, does not end with death.

I can only hope that these essential elements of the great ideal set before us, even though imperfectly presented, may themselves awaken in the hearts both of old pupils and of unknown readers—

“ A voice of Aspiration after Right,
A voice of Effort striving for the Best,
A voice of high Hope conquering Despair ! ”

ANNA BUCKLAND.

WEST HEATH,
HAM COMMON, SURREY.

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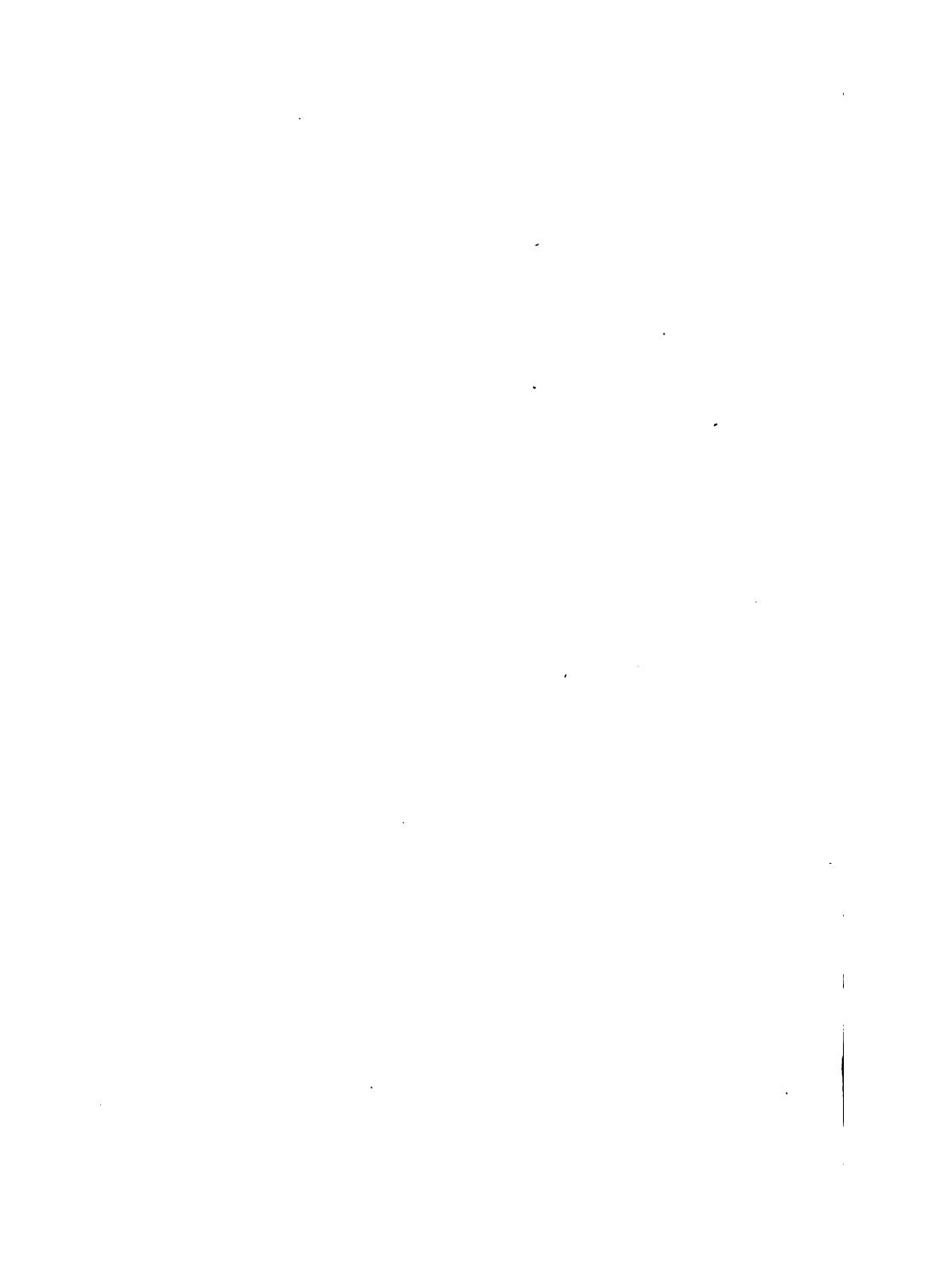
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GREETINGS



I.

KEY-NOTES.¹

WE meet together this evening with the sense of standing upon one of those boundary-lines which separate a Past from a Future ; and such critical moments, when we seem to be "leaving those things which are behind," and "reaching forth unto those which are before," are occasions suggesting serious thought, and calling forth earnest resolutions.

As we look around us to-night, many of you miss familiar faces ; there are others, again, who feel themselves half-bewildered among fresh scenes and unknown companions ; and all are conscious that we have entered into many new relations with one another, the issues of which lie among the uncertainties of the future. Amidst these mingled emotions, by what steadfast thought, by

¹ At the opening of the Summer Term, 1887. The first Term after removal to West Heath.

what high resolves, shall we brace ourselves to meet the duties and difficulties lying before us ?

In the first place, we may endeavour to hold fast to the truth, that in all the life of this world there is a vital element of growth and development, which is one of the most convincing proofs of the presence of the Divine in human affairs ; and when "the old order changeth, yielding place to new," we may accept the belief that God designs by this to work out further unfoldings of His Divine purpose. With this conviction, let us, in humble trust and reverence, prepare to be workers together with God, yielding ourselves to His designs, and seeking in every way to accomplish them.

How we may best practically work for this is a question to be answered day by day, as we take up the various details of "the trivial round, the common task." The high standard of any school is won by faithful work in each practical detail, and all future growth can only be carried on by the same thoroughness in the whole round of daily work ; but all practical work, even to the minutest detail, which is sound, and answers its purpose, is only lasting and efficient by reason of its being founded on general principles. No

noble, well-proportioned educational structure is ever built up by working at it anyhow. There must be certain fixed principles, upon which all school work and school life must be grounded ; and all who do not merely act blindly, under direction, should have a knowledge of these and a conscious recognition of them in all they do. I want, therefore, to give you this evening three great watchwords, as foundation-stones upon which, with God's help and blessing, we may carry on together the life and work of this school. These are—TRUTH, LOVE, DUTY.

I. TRUTH. No education and no social life can rise to its highest purpose and best development without *utter Truth*. The least falseness, or hollow pretence in either, is like

“ The little rift within the lute,
That by-and-by will make the music mute,
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit,
That rotting inward slowly moulders all.
It is not worth the keeping : let it go.”

Yes, *let it go*, for it is only a training in insincerity and hypocrisy ; worse than worthless.

Let us, then, make it our resolution to be wholly steadfast to Truth in work, in life, in word.

We will strive to secure on our part that the

teaching shall be real and accurate ; that facts shall be well ascertained and clearly stated, without exaggeration, or the warpings of prejudice ; and we shall endeavour to lead you to form just estimates of things, and to arrive at fair conclusions. In those arts which are for the study and expression of the ideal—Literature, Painting, Music and Song—we shall try to help you to understand the laws of TRUTH in regard to the Beautiful, to give you correct standards of taste, and to enable you to acquire the power of conscientious, accurate expression. We ask of you a corresponding fidelity to Truth in all your work ; a careful avoidance of inaccuracy in stating facts, names, or dates ; a conscientious endeavour to understand every subject you study, and the strictest care that all your work shall be the product of your own memory or intelligence.

Let us make Truth also the foundation of the school life. The fear to live our lives openly in the sight of others, implies always one of three things : the desire to appear other than we really are ; the want of a perfectly clear conscience in what we do ; or a mistrust of the loyalty of those around us. In all our relations with one another, let us act with perfect frankness and openness ;

trusting to sympathy and good feeling for preventing harsh criticism, or misunderstanding. Strive to make all your life sound and true throughout, true in a noble, pure simplicity, and you will need no tangled web of deceit to hide any of your actions, lest they should be misconstrued or condemned. "Avoid any temptation to concealment, or to resort to false excuses for wrong-doing." Even in words, choose always those which exactly express the truth in all you write or say. Careless writing and hasty speaking are the means by which falsehood is spread, even more than by conscious lying.

II. The second great foundation on which we wish to build up our life and work here, is LOVE. I do not speak here of that love which rises in our hearts at the inspiration of admiration and sympathy, and which draws one to another as friend to friend; nor of that natural affection which makes us cling to our kindred. These loves are common to humanity, and, as our Lord says, "Do not even publicans and sinners feel the same?" But the love on which we desire to ground our school life is more than a sentimental impulse or a natural instinct; it is a Divine principle, a heavenly growth, brought into the

world by Christ Himself. In His Sermon on the Mount He teaches us the nature of this love ; that it is to be a free, generous spirit of good will to all, independent of our prejudices, our fastidious fancies, our proud exclusiveness, and even of causes of offence which others may have given us. It is to show itself in justice ; in a due regard to the rights and interests of others ; and yet more in a generous liberality—"Give to him that asketh of thee:" and its golden rule is, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

It is only by an earnest resolve that we can make this love the law of our lives. It requires constant watchfulness and conscious culture ; and our Lord warns us of many things which, springing up in the soil of our own hearts, check this Divine growth. There is the sharp-eyed censoriousness, which detects motes in the eyes of others ; the love of petty criticism ; the spirit of ridicule and contempt ; and the grudging spirit of self-interest. We are many of us strangers as yet to one another ; but the love of which I speak is not restrained by that : it is ready to meet strangers as friends, to extend a hearty welcome and a kindly hand of fellowship to all. "I was a Stranger,

and ye took Me in," is Christ's word of commendation to the good and faithful servant.

III. DUTY. What shall we say of this third great watchword—"DUTY loved of LOVE"? How can we worthily express the depths of self-sacrifice, obedience, courage, and constancy which are concentrated in this one word? It is Duty which gives substance and action to Truth in the living world of men. It is Duty which embodies Love, in heroic, self-forgetful deeds.

Duty has been the one great watchword of all the truly noble; of all our great writers of English literature; of all our best patriots, statesmen, and leaders; for

"Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of Duty was the way to glory :
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outred
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of Duty was the way to glory :
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevailed,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is Moon and Sun."

We need never look out to a distant horizon for the sphere of our duty ; at present for all of us—principals, teachers, and students—it lies here, in this school. And to whatever interest or work the Will of God may call us in the days to come, we shall best prepare for it now by laying well to heart Carlyle's wise yet simple precept: "Do the Duty which lies *nearest* thee, which thou knowest to be a Duty, and the second will have already become clearer."

And which is this nearest Duty? Look into thy very heart of hearts, and thou wilt find it there ; for nearer than all outward things, nearer than the work in thy hands, the study before thy very eyes, is GOD. His Voice is speaking in thy soul, the very centre and essence of thy Being. Here is the Duty, which lies *nearest* thee. Yield to that Divine Voice, and reply, "Speak, Lord ; for Thy servant heareth ;" "I will run in the way of Thy commandments." Let this evening be the witness of a new resolution to accept all that God offers, and to render all to Him in return. Then will the second Duty already have become clearer, for it will lie before thee illumined by the very light of Heaven. It is a loyal devotion to the work, God has given us to do here. This

is to be fulfilled by diligence and fidelity in study ; by efforts to maintain the high character and tone of the school ; and by an honourable obedience to the rules.

Duty is no hard task-mistress, exacting wearisome labour ; Reason and Moderation are her handmaids ; and her rewards are increase of joy and sweet content. Her demand is a willing service of love, and

“ So nigh is glory to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers clear—THOU MUST,
The Youth replies—I CAN.”

II.

EARNESTNESS.¹

WE all know the thrill of interest with which we turn the page of an unread story, and begin a new chapter. We are well aware that the hero and heroine have no actual existence; but our sympathy with human life in its progress is so strong, that we long to learn how these unreal personages rise out of their trials and difficulties into a bright new life. We are to-night just turning the page of a new, unread chapter in a story, which is full of a far deeper interest for us than any that was ever conceived in the imagination of the greatest novelist; a story in which the heroine is no fictitious character, but that most real of all persons to each human being—that very I or ME, of whose existence we are the most conscious, and whose fate is to us of supreme importance. We begin to-night a new chapter in the story of

¹ At the opening of the Autumn Term, September, 1887.

our own lives; a chapter which each one must write for herself; a chapter which, when it is written, can never be changed, altered, or destroyed. No after-additions can be made to it, nothing can be erased from it; there it remains—the history of three months—a portion of our lives, which we can never blot out or annihilate, but which, for good or evil, will endure through all the coming years, and may even have its fruit in that life which is beyond our passage through this world.

Let us to-night choose a heading for this new chapter in our own story; a title which shall indicate what the character of the coming events shall be, what is the line which they shall take. There is one word which I want very much to give you as a watchword for this new Term. It is one of those great words which contain in themselves, as in a seed, a vital principle of life; so that, if we sow it in an honest and good heart, it will spring up and bring forth fruit in a thousand different forms. This word is *EARNESTNESS*. It contains within itself two elements, both of which are necessary to its very existence—*ACTIVITY* and *THOUGHTFULNESS*. Excitement, impulse, restlessness, emotion,—all involve action; but these

are not the source of the wise, sustained activity of **EARNESTNESS**; that alone is the outcome of **THOUGHTFULNESS**. We must first realize what we are, and what life means, before we can rouse **ACTIVITY**, and set it to work in right directions. We must learn to understand the greatness of that charge which God has placed in our keeping; the threefold care and training of the soul, the mind, the body, so that each may reach, as far as possible, that high, fair ideal, which is God's design for us. We must learn to know the laws of growth and development which God has laid down for us, and to realize fully that it is only as we actively obey these, and exercise ourselves in them, that we can become godly in soul, just and reasonable in mind, healthy and vigorous in body.

Let us now accept the truth, that the responsibility of our attaining this approach to a higher ideal of life lies in our own hands; and under the influence of this thoughtful conviction, let this Term be the story of greater earnestness in religious duties, in school work, and in healthful exercise and recreations. For we cannot, and never shall, dream ourselves into holiness and the love of God; we cannot, and never shall, drift into knowledge and wisdom; we cannot, and never

shall, dawdle into health and strength. The most attractive preacher cannot of himself make us godly and righteous ; the most interesting teacher cannot by his own efforts alone make us wise and well-informed ; the most skilful doctor cannot by his knowledge keep us healthy and strong. But because each of these knows more than we do of God's laws in regard to his special subject, so each may counsel and warn us. Yet it is we ourselves who must set our feet in the true paths of godliness, knowledge, health ; it is we ourselves who must exert our activity to walk in them. Let us clearly understand that in the whole of life on every side it is equally true that "God is not mocked : whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." God's laws of working are not to be held of no effect. There is to be no "I pray thee have *me* excused from obedience to them ; and let a special miracle make *me* righteous, wise, and sound in health, while I am neglecting religion, learning next to nothing, indulging myself in slothfulness and unwholesome things."

I. Let us first strive this Term to be more earnest and faithful in religious duties. I speak now only of those primary and simple outward forms of worship which are the beginning of the Christian

life, and yet beyond which no advance can carry us. These are duties incumbent upon us all, whether we only dimly recognize God as "the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," or have been "brought nigh unto Him through the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." And I urge only those upon you now for which we have the command and example of Christ, leaving all others to your own decision, and the experience of your own necessities.

The first of these is private prayer ; and for earnestness and fidelity in this duty, I ask for the hearty co-operation of all in securing silence in the bedrooms, so that each room may be as a little sanctuary, in which two or three meeting in prayer may realize the promise that Christ is in the midst.

The second is our daily worship, in which we assemble together as one family, and recognize God as the Protector and Ruler of our school and household.

The third is the public worship of God on the Sabbath day ; when we enlarge the sphere of our sympathies and relations, and join in an act of wide communion, offering prayers and thanksgivings to God as the Father of all men in the Name of Christ, the great Head of the Church.

Let us strive this Term for more earnestness, fidelity, and reverence in these religious duties. They are the divinely appointed means through which we receive God's grace and blessing; they are exercises of the soul by which we promote spiritual growth and vigour; and in the neglect of them we are guilty of breaking the first and greatest of all commandments—our duty towards God. Let us endeavour to look upon these acts of prayer and worship, in which we recognize our relations to God, as having the force of a Divine command, strengthened in intensity by the example of Christ, our highest Ideal and Pattern. We must accept the conviction that they are *duties*, not matters of taste and inclination in which we first ask—Shall I experience in them a pleasurable, intellectual, or emotional sensation? Shall I find more gratification in them than in the indulgence of my own ease, or in some amusement?

II. Let us take EARNESTNESS for our watchword in all our school work. Earnestness does not mean undue pressure and overwork. These result from the eager activity of ambition craving for the glory of intellectual success, or from the thoughtless indulgence of taste in the undue

pursuit of some favourite study. Earnestness is the fruit of a thoughtful perception of what education means, and of all that it can do for us. The true end of education is the development of the whole of our mental faculties, whereby we become more wise, just, self-controlled, more accurate and truthful, more rich in pure and sweet conceptions of the imagination, more tender and refined in feeling ; and thus by *being* more, become able to *do* more for God and others when the time comes for the woman's service of love in the family or the world. The thoughtful realization of this may well rouse us to activity in all our school work this Term, and fill us with a deeper sense of the necessity of real honest study, and with the scorn of all false pretence of learning, as well as with a low standard of idleness and frivolity. It is not what we are to *do* in the future, but what we are to *be*, which concerns us above all things now. "Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles?"

III. Let us make EARNESTNESS our watchword, again, in physical exercises and recreations. God has so constituted us that most of our duties become our pleasures, and this is especially the case in regard to those occupations which are

necessary to a healthy vigour of mind and body. Yet even here thoughtfulness and the exertion of activity are often necessary at starting to rouse us out of habits of indolent lounging, which, while appearing like repose, are not of the true nature of rest, but only increase a sense of languor and enervation.

We want your hearty co-operation this Term in an earnest endeavour to make the out-of-school life full of cheerful, healthful recreation. The spirit of listless depression is infectious. We injure others as well as ourselves when we give way to it; and we invigorate others as well as ourselves when we help to set on foot some good game, or some lively entertainment. Those who live the most earnest lives, whose aims are the highest, and whose work is the most thoughtful and diligent, are always the most ready for genuine recreation; they do not find vapid gossip and cheerless idleness sufficient entertainment for their leisure hours.

May the spirit of earnestness leaven and stimulate the whole of our school life this Term, so that the story of the coming three months may be one of a richer growth and development in godliness, intelligence, and healthful vigour!

III.

ASPIRATION.¹

WE begin to-day the First Term of a New Year, and although more than three weeks of 1888 are already gone, some of the hopes and feelings which were roused by its birth, still cling like the fragments of a golden mist to its early youth, and have not yet quite faded "into the light of common day." Let us try to-night if we can retain one of these New Year's sentiments, and make of it a practical, working motto, such as may serve as a stimulus to energy and constancy in all our labours throughout this Term.

At the beginning of a new period of time—often even at the breaking of a new day, or the commencement of another week—the feeling rises within us that the future ought to be something better than the past. We become conscious at such moments that there is a perfect model for

¹ At the opening of the Lent Term, January, 1888.

character, life, and work which we have never yet attained ; and we see how far we have fallen short of what we might have been and done, had we only always been and done our best.

“ Have we not all, amid life's petty strife,
Some pure ideal of a nobler life
That once seemed possible? Did we not hear
The flutter of its wings, and feel it near,
And just within our reach? Did it not seem
To be the truer life, and this the dream?”

And, strong in hope and ardent longing, we were ready at that time to forget the past, and reach forth to that which is before. That longing and reaching forth are called *ASPIRATION*. And it is this word which I want you to take as a motto for the new Term that we begin to-day.

How may Aspiration become for us something more than a mere empty dream of good—the clutching at a shadow? How can we make it the fixed principle of our lives, through which we may ever rise towards a richer, fuller development—an approach towards what God has designed for us to be?

Let us make quite sure, first, that the ideal we have set before us is nothing more nor less than that true, perfect type which God has given us. We may easily fall into the mistake of setting up

false ideals, and of aspiring to resemble these. We may be aiming only at some poor little dwarfed image, miserably below all that we are capable of becoming ; or we may be trying only to imitate some artificial, society model ; or some imperfect companion, whom we admire, and think we should like to resemble ; or we may be making a vainglorious effort to assume the form of some distorted shadow. Now, do you ask, What is, then, the true ideal towards which we should aspire ? I can only reply, that I do not know it fully : one sees it more and more the longer one lives. We know that it exists in Christ. But do we yet know Him fully ?

If we raise our eyes from what we are, and have yet achieved, and look before us, we may see a vision of a noble, truthful character, just in judgment, faithful to duty, pure in heart, humble and sweet in feeling, simple in desire, exact to truth in word and deed, full of love and service to God and man, owning God as King, and living in loyal obedience to His commands. United with such a character we see an exactly balanced mind, sound and clear in its reasoning powers, quick and accurate in observation, rich in imagination, discerning and correct in taste, wise with the practical wisdom of intelligence and sympathy combined.

And as we gaze on this vision, so far before us, a voice says to us, "This is what God means *you* to be. This is what all your education and training are for. This is what Christ lived and died to accomplish in you."

Now, what should hinder us from aspiring to this ideal?

First, there is the indolent tendency to drift along with the stream. We say, "Other people are ignorant, false, and vulgar; I may as well be the same. There is no need to aim at more than the low standard of others." What would have become of the world—how could the Church have become the salt of the earth, the city set on a hill—if there had not been courageous souls of a nobler spirit than this?

Secondly, there is the spurious humility, which says, "I am not clever nor good; others may become intelligent, wise, and righteous, but it is not for me to cherish this aspiration. I am satisfied with only a low standard of attainment." You do not yet know what your own possibilities are. We none of us know what we might become and achieve, if we only aspired higher, and lived in that aspiration. There is something better for you in the future; and it may not be very far

above you either. It is the want of Aspiration, the lowness of our aims, that makes and keeps us low. The little brook, which had heard of the great ocean, thought it was very far ahead of her, and cried—

“I despair
Of that wide and glorious sea,
That was promised unto me ;”

and so she was satisfied to remain in the low-lying meadows, until she just dried up into nothingness. And yet sometimes, when all her strength was gone, the miserable thought would come to her, as she heard the ocean's murmur—

“Just a few steps more,
And there might have shone for me
Blue and infinite the sea.”

Thirdly, there is the common idea, which often checks Aspiration, that a little success in an inferior aim is better than failure to attain a complete success in a greater purpose. In Sir Philip Sydney's "Arcadia" he says, "Who shoots at the midday sun, though he be sure he shall never hit the mark, yet as sure he is he shall shoot higher than who aims but at a bush." We know we can hit the low bushes around us, and because we can do this easily we like to fancy we are good archers ;

but if we never aim at a higher and more distant mark, we can never reach any great degree of skill, and we shall rest in a very mistaken idea of our own powers. In aiming at *strict* obedience, *exact* truth, *perfect* work, we shall, even in failure, rise in life and work above those who are satisfied with laxity and slovenliness. If we aim at a higher examination and fail to pass in it, we may have attained more than those who are successful in passing a lower.

Aspiration, in filling us with a "noble discontent" with ourselves and our work, teaches us true humility. Great men, it is often remarked, are the most humble; and the reason of this is, that their very greatness enables them to see more fully the glory and beauty of the ideal, by which alone they judge themselves and their work.

"The weight of glory doth them bend
Then most, when most their souls ascend.
Nearest the throne of God must be
The footstool of Humility."

Aspiration must be joined with practical effort, or it is only a windy sentiment. No aspiring genius ever "awoke to find himself famous" who went to sleep ignorant and slovenly in his work. We must "do noble things, not dream them all

day long," and in this complete harmony of the Ideal with the Real make all our life "one grand sweet song."

How may we embody Aspiration in practical work? It is no mystic, visionary process. The directions are clear and simple. Be faithful, in trying always in God's strength to be and do your best; be less indulgent to your own failures, less ready with weak excuses. Watch and pray. Christ, the perfect Ideal, is with us in our efforts. Run the race set before you, looking unto Him as its Aim and End. This is all. Aspiration is not ambition.

The leaven which leaveneth the whole lump is individual truth in purpose and work. We must first be true to ourselves and our own highest life before we can exercise any inspiring influence over others. Only be faithful to what is true, pure, and right, and your influence and example will strengthen and elevate the companions of your school life and work, as real character and courageous action always do; but cherish also Aspiration for the school itself of which you are a member. Keep before you the true ideal, which it should attain in education, in moral tone, in organization, and in refinement; and work heartily

with us this Term in a common endeavour to realize more fully this ideal. Do not look upon your school merely as a place where you may come for a little while and get all you can out of it ; but rather as a living body, of which you are a member, partaking of its very life ; responsible with the whole, and to the whole, for its symmetrical growth and beauty.

Let Aspiration be as a breeze from Heaven to waft us onward through this opening Term.

“Come, my friends,
Push off ; and sitting well in order, smite
The sounding furrows ; strong in hope and will,
To strive, to seek, to find ; for far ahead,
And like a lane of light across the sea,
There shines the vision of the golden year.”

IV.

THE BEEHIVES.¹

IN the old summer-house in this garden there are two very curious carved tablets, which are evidently of the same date as the summer-house itself, for they are built into the original structure; and from the dress of the figures carved upon them, one sees they must be as old as the latter end of the last century. One represents under various symbols the brotherhood of humanity, the other the unity of the Church. On the first of these old tablets there are two beehives, with the bees all busy at work around the hives; and over one hive are the words, "Each for all," and over the other, "All for each." Now, I want you to take these two beehives, with their inscriptions, as a symbol and a motto for the school this Term.

The hive of bees suggests to us at once the idea

¹ At the opening of the Summer Term, May, 1888.

of busy, industrious activity—each one engaged in “works of labour or of skill,” and every hour bringing its cheerful occupations of “books, or work, or healthful play ;” no lazy indifference, or enervating idleness, giving opportunities for vain dreaming and foolish “mischief.” And the steady, unremitting diligence of the bees, all through the sunshine hours of the summer, also reminds us that our work, like theirs, is but for a season. Although it is perfectly true that our whole life is in one sense an education, which is never finished, yet these special opportunities for culture, which are provided for you in your classes, lessons, and lectures here, can only be used by you during a few short Terms. The bees can only gather honey in the time of flowers ; and there are many things which you can only make your own just at that time when the means of obtaining the knowledge you need are all around you. Let this season slip by in idleness and inattention, and you have lost what you can never recall during the remainder of your life in this world.

But what I want more especially to bring before you, on the first evening of this new Term, is not so much your own gains or losses, through industry or idleness, as that idea of a corporate or

common life, which a hive of bees represents so wonderfully. This is expressed in the motto over the hives in the old summer-house : " Each for all, and all for each." We live and work here, not only as individuals, but as a school. Try to realize the notion of a corporate life, as distinguished from the single life of an individual. Think of a cube, which is composed of six sides ; yet one of those sides alone is not a cube, and has none of the properties of a cube. A century is nothing more than a hundred single years ; yet each one alone does not represent the life and ideas and the characteristics of the century. And when a number of human beings combine together to form a community, such as a school, the body thus formed by the union of individuals has its own shape, features, character, life, and development.

Let us endeavour to understand the double responsibility which thus rests upon us—the double set of duties. We do not meet together here only for ourselves, and we shall miss some of the best blessings and advantages of school life if we only look upon the school as a place where we come to please ourselves, and get all we can for our own profit or gain. Let us rise above that narrow, self-centred proverb, " Each one for

himself," and take for our motto, "Each for all, and all for each;" for this is indeed no less than Christ's law for His Body, the Church: "No man liveth unto himself." Our Lord saw that we could not rise even to the highest spiritual life if we only thought of ourselves as individuals, saved by faith in Him; He therefore ordained that each one should be a member of that great community, the Holy Catholic Church, of which He is the Head; and He gave to this body visible form, with certain privileges, laws, sacraments, and a distinct corporate life.

We see, then, that for our best development and training, we need to realize our membership and oneness with others; and I want to direct your attention this evening to some of the advantages, the responsibilities, and the duties which are ours, because we form a community, a school.

I. In the first place, one great benefit in belonging to an educational institution is that we can enjoy superior advantages of culture without the feeling that these are the special privilege of one's self as an individual. No one here can feel that she, and she alone, is the centre of all the provision made for the intellectual growth and training, the health, well-being, and happiness of

the community. Think of the difference in the case of an only child at home: the little world around her seems to have been called into being for her alone, and a sense of self-exaltation and egotism is unavoidably produced by the very superiority of the advantages she enjoys.

II. We cannot live a true life as a worthy member of any community without self-denial, self-renunciation. The very principle on which a National State is founded is that a certain number of persons renounce a part of their individual liberty, in order to obey laws which are made for the good of the whole body. We also have our rules, which are necessary for the order and organization of the school; there may be some few for whom such regulations may not be needed, but when these yield obedience to the rules made for the government of the whole body, they win the blessing of a training in the sacrifice of self for the common good. Even as Christ, Who needed no law for Himself, obeyed the law of every community of which He became a member by His entrance into this world—that moral law of God, binding on every son of man; the laws of family life; of the Jewish Church; of the Roman State.

III. It is in the life of a community that we learn that sympathy which gives our emotions a wider, healthier scope. When our feelings are kept in exercise upon our own individual grievances and pleasures alone, we become morbid and selfish; but when the joy which fills our heart is a common joy shared by all—when we thrill with honest pride at the educational success of any of our community, which casts a gleam of credit on the school—the emotion raises us out of ourselves; it is a pure, unselfish, and ennobling feeling. It is also true that, if one member suffers, the others suffer too. An act of misconduct not only degrades the individual who commits it, but it is felt as a shame and a disgrace to the whole school.

IV. And this brings us to another most important result of being a member of a community, and that is the deeper sense of responsibility which it gives us. We never fully wake up to the realization of what life is, of why we are here, members of the human brotherhood, until we come out of ourselves, into a life in which others have their part and share. You know well how rapidly a thought, an idea, will spread through a school—how an idle, self-indulgent girl becomes

a centre for idleness and self-indulgence ; how a disobedient, ill-willed girl becomes a centre for disobedience and ill will ; and, on the other hand, how a bright, intelligent girl, thoroughly interested in her work, is a source of healthful stimulation to others ; how a high-minded, refined girl causes others to feel ashamed of meanness and vulgarity ; and how a thoroughly loyal girl inspires others with a like spirit towards her teachers and the school.

V. Out of our responsibilities arise our duties. We have seen how, when a number of persons combine together to form a community, like a school, the body thus formed has its own shape, features, character, and development, but these are produced and fixed by the individual members. Each one of you has the power of helping to build up this school into a fair and noble structure, or of introducing into it the elements of disorganization and corruption. There is grand work for each one of you to do here, and we call on you this evening to set about it ; we know that there are many of you willing and ready to do your utmost to support what is right, to put down wrong, and to maintain the character and tone of the school. Be courageous, and be

hopeful, for you are doing work for God, and He will strengthen your hands and establish it. But, like all great work, it can only be done simply and humbly. No one individual can say, "I am going to make the school this or that." We can only combine, and work together, "Each for all, and all for each;" yet it is by our own truth and faithfulness to what is right, by maintaining always a high standard, and living up to it ourselves, that we can help to form what we may call a sound and high-toned public opinion. I want you to realize the great importance of this, and how enduring are its results.

Every girl in this school, except a very few, lives more or less under the prevailing ideas of the community. Each new girl who enters the school yields more or less to the influence of the public opinion which has been already established; and long after you are gone from the school, the influence of your ideas and your actions will remain, and will continue to take effect for good or ill on those who come after you, and whom you may never see or know.

Oh, let us in God's strength cast off the spirit of self-assertion and self-pleasing, and rise to the sense of the greatness of those duties which spring

out of our common life together here ! It is something more than the endeavour to secure heaven for ourselves ; it is the entering into the blessed spirit and work of Christ Himself—One giving Himself for all, in order to establish God's kingdom here :—

“ Let thyself die,
And dying, rise again to fuller life.
To be a *whole* is to be small and weak ;
To be a part is to be great and mighty,
In the one spirit of the mighty whole—
The spirit of the martyrs and the saints.”

Now, what are some of those duties which become ours when we enter into the responsibilities of a common life? And here I do not wish to speak to you as one of the heads of the school addressing the pupils. I speak as one of the community, on whom, with all the teachers and yourselves, the like duties fall, because we, one and all together, have resting upon us equally the responsibility of forming the character and public opinion of the school. We cannot do it without you ; you cannot do it without us.

1. And now, as one of the first duties, I think I ought to place WATCHFULNESS. If we close our eyes to what is wrong, either through selfish indifference or vain delusion, we are unfaithful


to our responsibilities as members of this community. We stand here, each one, as God's sentinels, to keep watch and guard against the entrance of His foes—the world, the flesh, and the devil. We must not pretend that there is no danger, that there are no weak points, no traitors. Those who know themselves best and their own weakness, know the need there is for constant watchfulness within and without. Our Blessed Lord, Who knew what was in man, is most urgent in pressing on His disciples this duty of watchfulness over themselves and one another. The sower had sown good seed in his field, but he neglected to watch for the enemy who was busy sowing tares among the wheat. In order to maintain a high standard in the school, it is necessary to keep faithful guard against the little beginnings of evil.

“ It is the little rift within the lute,
That by-and-by will make the music mute,
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit,
That rotting inward slowly moulders all.”

2. Inseparably joined with faithful Watchfulness must be SYMPATHY and LOVE, or Watchfulness will degenerate into a sharp-eyed spying out of

faults, and a tendency to indulge in gossip and criticism. Whilst, in a spirit of love and deep concern for the best life of our community, we watch in order to check the beginnings of wrong, let us carefully avoid all personal remarks and petty discussions over the conduct of others; this is not the vigilance of love, but the irritability of ill will.

3. COURAGE. This is a duty we all find hard to practise when we come to live in a community. How many may say with Saul, "I have sinned, because I *feared the people, and obeyed their voice*" ! But if we wish to be doing God's work here, we must both speak and act boldly and bravely in every question of right and wrong. It is through cowardice that the standard of right becomes lowered in a school, and that we get into the habit of calling things by false names. Let us strive earnestly this Term to be fearless and true, and to measure good and evil by God's estimate of them, instead of accepting the standard and phrases of the society world without, or the little world within these walls. It is this truthful, brave speaking about right and wrong which will make you as women the salt of the earth in your own families, and in the social circles in which you



may afterwards move. It is this which is the great power of women over society ; it is this which is so much needed in the present day. Learn the habit of courageous speaking and acting now, of calling things by their right names, of fidelity to God's standard of conduct, and you will in this way not only fulfil your duty to our little community, but fit yourselves to become as stars of pure sweet light in the darkness and bewilderment of the world's deluding mists.

4. **CONSISTENCY.** By this I mean the harmony between our inward and outward life, our thoughts and feelings, words and actions, so that the outward life simply expresses the inward, and is in exact accord with it.

Such characters are a most powerful influence in any community, although they may be unconscious of it themselves, and others also may not at once perceive the source of their power for good. If we would do true work for God here, we must be consistent. Talking about religion, and the culture of religious sentiment, lower instead of elevating us, if these are made to do instead of godliness and righteousness. We cannot help others by words to which our own life and conduct do not correspond. We may call it

“working for God,” or “doing good,” but if there is the discord of falseness within, the jarring notes of laxity of principle in our conduct, we are aiding in that great design of Satan, by which he has attempted from the beginning to weaken and destroy the living, regenerating power of Christianity—the work of Christ in us.

Let us seek this Term to care for and love our school ; and may we feel more and more that God is here, working with us in all our endeavours to establish His kingdom ; and let us pray for the spirit of Christ amongst us, that spirit in which He lived His life among men—the One giving His life for all.

V.

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.¹

IT is a common saying, that the Past is gone for ever, the Future has not yet arrived, and the Present alone is ours. But this, like many common sayings, is more trite than true ; for though we can never live over again "the days that are no more," yet our Past has become a part of ourselves, and is therefore still present with us. We are this day very much what we began to be some time ago ; our present characters have taken their qualities and features from habits acquired in the Past. The same process goes on into the Future, and is now shaping and moulding this for us. We are this day preparing and building up what we shall be and do in days to come, and thus we have the Future even already in our hands, and are giving it the form which it will take.

It is hard, I know, fully to believe and realize

¹ At the opening of the Autumn Term, 1888.

this ; we hope so much that results will not follow causes ; we like to fancy that some happy accident will interrupt even what appears to be a universal law, and thus, in our special case, conjure good fruit out of empty husks or worthless weeds.

And then the Present is so much with us ; it is so full of bright interests and keen enjoyment that it seems to fill the whole stage of life, and to shut out the Past and the Future behind the scenes ; and thus we are tempted to “fleet the time carelessly,” as though there were no tomorrow, and had been no yesterday. I do not want to cast a shadow over the sunshine of the Present by any regret for the Past, or by anxiety in regard to the Future ; but yet I desire for you, above all things, that you may live in the Light and walk in the Truth ; for it is just as we do this that our lives are real, progressive, useful, and happy. Light and Truth are the very elements of all the blessedness of life ; darkness and illusion only lead us astray into folly and misery. We cannot shut our eyes to any of God’s laws, and be the brighter and happier for our blindness.

I want to help you, therefore, if I can, to see for yourselves how we cannot live rightly in the Present by casting from us the Past, and never

anticipating the Future ; because the Present is the outcome and growth of the Past ; and it is also the material out of which the Future is shaped and decided. I have no hesitation in pressing this upon you as undoubtedly true, for it is simply the working of an unfailling law, the presence and action of which we constantly prove in our own experience and see exhibited in the lives of others. We have God's own testimony, that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

I. First let us try to see how the Present is the fruit of the Past. You are sometimes anxious to have your character described from a photograph, or from your handwriting. When you receive such a delineation, which may be more or less true, did you ever ask yourself, How did I become this or that? What has produced these qualities, these characteristics?

If you look into the memory of your past life, you will probably see that most of the present features of your character, your present inclinations and tastes, have been formed from habits which you have at some time acquired. You can, perhaps, remember certain circumstances or companionships to the influences of which you

then yielded yourself; and now habit has become second nature, so that you think, feel, speak, and act this day very much out of what you began to think, say, and do in days gone by. If you thus look into memory you will see how much the Past is still living in the Present, and how the Present is the outcome of the Past; and this will help you to realize the truth, that the Future will be the growth of the Present. But before we pass on to speak of this, there are other very important views of the Past which I want you to see clearly. There is a sense in which we should forget the Past, so as not to make that the standard of the Present. We must look away from all that we have already attained, and fix our eyes on that ideal which God calls upon us to reach. "Forgetting those things that are behind," we must "press toward the mark" set before us; but, at the same time, I want you to remember this, that all real advance, all higher developments, are *growths*, and not a series of abrupt transitions. There is one law in the natural, the intellectual, the moral, and the spiritual life. Each new upward progress, each fresh unfolding, each higher form of development, springs from roots already in existence; roots which have been planted by

the same great Divine Creator, Who made man in His image, and is the Source of all the vitality we possess, as well as of the laws which govern its progress. Do you wish with coming years to reach a higher standard of intelligence, goodness, knowledge ; to attain to the fair ideal of womanhood, in its purity, grace, and unselfish love ? Hold fast to the roots of these in the Past. Be watchful over them, for it is out of these roots that the future growth must spring.

Most of you are now standing on the verge where womanhood and childhood meet. You are anxious to take the next step ; you would like already to forestall the future. But do not imagine that you become a woman by ceasing to be a child. It is out of the roots of the past that all the new growth must spring. The sweetest, noblest graces of womanhood are the fruit of the innocence and simplicity of childhood ; and no high ideal can be reached but by preserving these. If you cast from you, as something you have outgrown and done with, your reverent childlike faith in God, your trustful obedience, your transparent truth, and your innocence of evil, you are plucking up the roots of what are to bear the fairest flowers, the most precious fruits in time to come. It is

no advance to substitute for these a knowledge of the world, a critical, sarcastic spirit, self-conceit and self-assertion; these are only blights and deformities—stunted growths—which simply show that progress has been arrested, and real development checked. All advance is upward, heavenward; and nothing can be more terribly sad than the thought with which poor Hood closes the recollections of his childhood—

“But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heaven
Than when I was a boy.”

Fröbel has rightly said that “a little child is a thought of God.” Can that which is a Divine idea ever become worthless—something to be cast off as done with? Never. Each new stage of life is a Divine growth from a Divine creation; our Lord teaches us this when He bid His disciples go back into their past, and become again as little children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven.

II. Now let us see how the Present is also the seed of the Future, and how you are now sowing “what the coming years will yield.”

People used to fancy that fortune-tellers could predict for them their future fate, and in this belief they were even ready to pay any money in order

to be assured that happiness and prosperity would be the fruit of folly and idleness. No great dramatist and no great novelist have ever ventured in their works thus to set aside the unchanging laws of life. When Richardson, one of our earliest novelists, was besieged by letters from his lady-readers, begging him to make the life of the "interesting villain" in one of his stories turn out happily in the last volume, he simply replied, "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

If you had in your possession the magic mirror in which the Earl of Surrey was shown the fair Geraldine, you could not divine your future fate so clearly as you may see it, if you will only look into the present and notice what habits you are now forming, to what influences you are yielding yourself.

Habits of slothfulness and self-indulgence cannot result in the pleasures of intelligence and the joyfulness of a useful, healthful activity; they can only produce the dulness of ignorance and the depression of lassitude, and where is the happiness of such a life?

"She only said, 'My life is dreary!' . . .
She said, 'I am weary, weary,
I would that I were dead!'"

The habit of yielding to self-will forms a character in which reason and conscience have become the slaves of impulse. The follies and caprices of such a character produce their own results in a harvest of troubles, which it needs no magic to foresee.

On the other hand, the humble endeavour after a life of trust in God and of obedience to His laws, the recognition and acceptance of the unspeakable gift of His Son, in all that Christ has done and will do for us, will be to you a source of "peace that passeth understanding," because you will be living and working together with God, in perfect harmony with your Divine Father, and with those conditions of your life in this world in which He has placed you, and means you to thrive and grow as His child. Thus keeping "in tune with heaven," your future must be calm and bright; for even amidst the trials and difficulties with which you may have to struggle, you will ever find that

"ONE has the mastery,
Who makes the joy the last in every song."

Are you anxious to know whether your life is to be rich in the love of faithful friends? Look again into the present, and see if you are now

seeking to acquire habits of courtesy and kindly feeling towards all, or whether you are isolating yourself through pride, or indulging yourself in ill-natured gossip and the ridicule of others. It is the grace and charm of courtesy which first wins friends, and if this be sustained by good will and love, and by

"A heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathize,"

you need never fear that your future fate is to be left, like the last rose of summer, friendless and alone.

You need only look into the present again, to predict what will be the results of your school course and of the educational advantages you are receiving. Will you in the future be a well-informed, accomplished woman, capable of all the high service and varied enjoyments which are at all times the resource of a cultivated mind? This depends upon whether you are now practising the habit of close attention to your studies. No chance can make an idle, listless pupil into an intelligent, well-educated woman. Intellectual progress is less the result of spending many hours in study than of a habit of fixing the attention at every class or lecture. If you will only strive this

Term to acquire this habit, and to check everything which diverts attention, you will find that you not only make far more rapid progress in the subjects you are studying, but that your intelligence and quickness of understanding are greatly increased, while you also will attain that power of mastering your thoughts which will be of incalculable benefit to you throughout your future life.

Live in the Present, then, with the clear conviction that you are every day moulding and shaping what your future life must be. It is because we know the unfailing certainty of those laws by which God rules the course of human affairs, that we are so anxious in regard to your life here at school, so desirous to make the whole atmosphere which surrounds you thoroughly healthful and stimulative of all true intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth. We cannot direct the events of your future lives—the fondest parent has no power to do this; we can only watch over you so as to discern what influences are at work among you, what habits you are forming, and thus strive to check the evil and foster the good. But it is for you to be workers together with us, even as we strive to be workers together with God in all that

concerns you. Try to understand this for yourselves, and to see the meaning and purpose of the organization in which you live here, and of the teaching and training you receive. We desire to see you happy in the Present, and we seek, as you know, to promote every kind of healthful pleasure and lively recreation in the school ; but the purpose of all education and training lies in the Future. School days are not the harvest home ; they are the season of labour, tilling and sowing, and for this every worker in the field has to practise self-denial and self-restraint. The joy is a joy set before us, something above and beyond the fleeting amusement of the hour, and for the sake of this we must all of us alike work, pray, and endure.

III. What is this Future which we are now preparing and shaping for ourselves? It is more than a few years of amusement and success in society. It is more than many happy years of home love and life. It is more than the whole course of earthly existence from youth to extremest age. It is an endless pathway upon which we take step after step, and yet we approach no nearer to its close. Death is not its boundary, for "there is no death! what seems so is transition;" it is only the passing from one phase of life to another. A veil

of mist shrouds the road as it lies before us, but upon it are cast the lights and shadows of the life beyond this world. Let us be careful that we follow no vain illusions, but lift our eyes to receive these gleams of Divine light wherever they may fall, and then the Future will be no dark pathway in which we walk with dread and stumbling, but a bright onward course, carrying us ever upward into the very light of God—the perfect day.

VI.

RESPONSIBILITY.¹

I WANT to say a few earnest words to you at the beginning of this new Term on a subject which you may, perhaps, find a little difficulty in understanding and realizing. It is RESPONSIBILITY. Let us first try to see what it means.

God has so placed us in this world, that all our life, growth, and fruitfulness depend on our maintaining certain relations with persons and things around us, which are called our environment. Look at one of the trees in the avenue in the garden ; the supply of sap, which is the very life-blood of the tree, is drawn by the roots out of the earth in which it is planted. The carbonic-acid gas, which is its breath of life, must be inhaled by the leaves from the atmosphere which surrounds it. Its blossoms and fruit depend upon its being able to look upward into the clear sky above, and receive thus the

¹ At the opening of the Lent Term, 1889.

light and heat of the glorious summer sun. And even then the life of the tree is not complete without its relations to its companions, amongst which it stands ; from them it derives, and to them it affords, protection, strength, and shade ; while the twining ivy clings to it for support, and the tender little flower nestles securely at its foot. As the healthy life of the tree in the garden depends on its maintaining its relation with its environment, so does our life in God's great garden of this world. We are planted here in the midst of all those things which are needful for our best life, growth, and fruitfulness. And we, too, cannot stand alone ; we need the help of others, and we exercise over them an influence which directs and shapes their development.

But there is this great difference between you, who are God's children, and the trees of the garden, which are His creation. God leaves it to you to maintain or not your true relations with all those things which are necessary to your highest life ; and He leaves it to you to choose the kind of influence which you will bring to bear on the companions among whom you live.

This is **RESPONSIBILITY**. What you are this Term, and what you cause others to be, God trusts

in your hands. And why? Not because He is indifferent to what any one of His children is or does. We know that He is grieved or pleased with what we are and do. It is because the God of Truth desires that all goodness of character or work should be *real*, that it should be your own ; not forced upon you by the stronger will of another, but wrought out in you and through you. This is why God makes us responsible for our own self-improvement, as well as for the state of the world around us ; and the more we think of this, and try to realize it, the more we shall feel how serious life is, on account of its responsibilities. Sometimes, indeed, the sense of responsibility may almost seem to overwhelm us, and to lie like an oppressive burden upon our spirits ; and then, if we are selfish and cowardly, we shall try to get rid of the thought of it, and strive to shake it from us, either by persuading ourselves that it matters very little what we say or do ; or, that after all it is some one else who is really responsible, and we may take our ease and let things go.

Now, we never can get rid of responsibility by pretending to ignore it, and trying to forget it. It is a God-given sense, a part of our very nature, and we can no more free ourselves from it than we can

silence conscience, stifle remorse, or destroy the sense of duty. Again and again, in some pause of life, the conviction will flash upon us—I was responsible at that time for what I did, and for what I caused others to do, and I am responsible for what I am making of my life now. It is only by thoroughly accepting our responsibilities, by looking them bravely in the face, and taking them to our very hearts, that we cease to feel the weight of the burden ; for just as we rise into a keener sense of any responsibility, so does the grace and help of God descend in larger measure upon us, and meet our needs and enable us to worthily fulfil what is required of us. Here is our strength, and here is the cheerful courage, that makes us go forth as “happy warriors,” to take our due share in the conflict and to accept the call of duty.

Let us now try to realize what are the practical responsibilities which especially press upon us here, at the commencement of this new Term ; and first in order stands the individual responsibility resting upon each one for self-improvement. What have you yet done for this? Have you fully realized that it depends upon yourself to make real progress this Term in intelligence and knowledge? The means of a superior and liberal education are

around you, and the results of last Term testified to very good teaching in, I think I may say, every subject. But you are responsible for the attention, industry, and good work which are necessary in order to make the best teaching a culture for you. Many of you do certainly recognize this, for last Term was distinguished by a much wider interest in the different studies, and by an awakening of intellectual energy which showed itself in the increased number of good papers sent in for examination. But there is much still to be done; a vast field of knowledge lies before you, and you possess unknown capabilities of intellectual development. Accept the responsibility resting on you for the use of the educational advantages provided for you, and God will help and bless you in your work.

In self-improvement is also included the growth and development of character. What have you done for this? Do you fully realize that it rests with you to receive or reject the influences for good which are around you? Efforts are made to set before you God's high standard of character and conduct, what He intends and desires that you should be, and we cannot, dare not, lower this; for we should be false to you if we did, and false to the blessed work of Christ which He has

accomplished for your redemption and elevation. God now places in your hands the responsibility of accepting or refusing the religious teaching which you will receive through different channels this new Term, as well as the choice of accepting or refusing the gift of Divine life in Christ.

You have also around you in your companions influences for good or for evil, for it is God's plan in training His children that we should be exposed to both. It will be so all our lives ; for, as Kingsley once said, "We can live in no world, not even the 'religious world,' but the Flesh and the Devil are there." It is for us to choose the good and to reject the evil, and to overcome evil by good.

And here I should like to say a word to those who have only just entered upon school life. Do not choose your friends too hastily, nor let yourselves at once drift along any current eddying around you. The best life of the school is not in the froth upon its surface. There are under-currents of good feeling and right principle, which, if you seek for them, will carry you with them, safely and steadfastly, in the right direction. But these are not always perceived at once, for it is of the nature of goodness to be modest and silent, while folly is always making itself seen and heard.

This brings us to the thought, that we are responsible for what we cause others to be and do. Their best life lies also in our hands. Shall we make them idle, disobedient, deceitful, rude, vain? We can do so. It is left in our power. But Christ has said, "Woe unto him that causeth another to offend. It were better that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should cause one of these little ones to offend." And if ever the sense of responsibility should wake keenly to life, the heaviest burden of remorse will be the thought of the wrong-doing we have led others to commit; for while we may repent for ourselves, and amend our own lives, we cannot do this for those we have led astray, and who may have passed out of the sphere of our influence for ever. We are indeed our "brothers' keepers" here; it is not enough merely to let others alone, while we quietly pursue the even tenor of our way. We are responsible for the evils we have made no endeavour to check; we are responsible for the existence of wrong around us which we have made no earnest, faithful attempts to counteract. Every human being stands in this way in relation to every other member of the great brotherhood of humanity.

“ Our brethren to their brethren call,
And by the Love which loved them all,
And by the whole world's Life they cry,
' Come o'er and help us, or we die.' ”

The sense of responsibility is like a stone thrown into an expanse of water ; the circles widen ever, till the whole world is included in the last circumference ; but as the stone strikes the water it first makes a strong, deep impression within a little circle close around it. And thus your sense of responsibility must first find its exercise within your environment here, and make here its most powerful mark. There are many of you, I know, who are ready to accept this responsibility, and are anxious to be faithful to it. You wish to strengthen and support all that is good, and to check whatever may be wrong. But perhaps you ask, How can I best do this ?

I. By an honest, outspoken expression of opinion in regard to all matters of right and wrong. One of the strongest influences for good in any community is a sound, clearly manifested, public opinion.

II. By a resolute effort to stop wrong-doing at once, either by personal influence, or, if this is not sufficient, by a direct appeal to the proper authority.

III. By kindly sympathy, and an endeavour to win the confidence of younger companions, who appear to be yielding to any undesirable influence. And this should, I think, be especially exercised in regard to those who enter as strangers amongst us.

IV. By the breaking through of any old school traditions which are measured by any other standard than that of the highest—the law of Christ.

V. By a steadfast example of goodness, respect for authority, and of refinement.

In connection with these suggestions, I must add, that we can never fulfil any of our responsibilities in regard to the world around us without courageous, self-forgetting *faithfulness*; and I do not think it too much to say, that it is almost impossible to seek at the same time to be faithful and popular. “No man can serve two masters;” and one of the chief elements of popularity is that kind of subtle flattery which tends to make people satisfied and pleased with themselves as they are, even when they fall far short of the standard they might attain in intelligence, character, and conduct.

But faithfulness has its own reward. There is the love and approval of God, the voice of Christ, saying, “Well done, good and faithful

servant ;” and there is the true, deep, steadfast love of all those whom we have helped to reach their best and highest life, as well as the sympathy and love of all who are our own fellow-workers in the same great cause. Those heroes of the Church, of whom you heard every Sunday afternoon last Term, could never have won that wonderful triumph of the Church over the corrupt world of the old Roman Empire if they had yielded faithfulness to seek popularity ; yet the memory of them is still a sweet fragrance amongst us, after more than a thousand years have passed away.

“Worthy deeds they wrought ; and wonders
Worthy of the Name they bore :
We, with highest praise and meetest,
Honour them for evermore.”

They have a message for you this Term—for all of us—and it is, BE FAITHFUL ; and this, again, is but an echo of the words of their Lord and ours : “ Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.”

VII.

TRUST.¹

AT the beginning of our lives in this world, we entered upon an utterly unknown state of existence. We brought with us no acquaintance with anything which could help us to understand the materials which we found around us, and no previous experience which could afford us any guidance in the circumstances amongst which we woke to the consciousness of life. We were utterly dependent on persons already in the world for the very necessities of our existence, and for saving us from constant dangers.

By degrees we began to find out the nature and properties of some of those things with which we were most familiar :—the furniture was hard and had sharp corners ; the fire burned, and so did the brilliant candle ; the shining knife cut the fingers ; the pretty flowers, the scent of which was so sweet,

¹ At the opening of the Summer Term, 1889.

were not pleasant to the taste nor good for food. And thus Experience began to teach us some of its simplest lessons ; but there were still vast tracts into which it had not yet led our little feet, and we could only trust to those whose practical knowledge had been gained by some years of observation and reasoning.

At the same time that we were beginning to find out things for ourselves, through experiment, we also began to listen eagerly to stories of the great world beyond the nursery walls ; but these half-understood descriptions we mixed up with the creations of our own imagination, so that we lived in the world as in a fairy-land, where nothing was governed by natural laws, and the most unlooked-for results might constantly occur. Believing in this world of fancy, mixed with distorted facts, we became the victims of illusions ; we trembled at dangers which had really no existence, and ran unconsciously into the most imminent, actual perils. Had we not trusted in those whose knowledge and experience of the reality was more accurate and varied than our own, we could not have survived that immature stage of existence.

When the course of regular education begins, we are taught to observe more closely and correctly,

and, as the reasoning powers are developed, we learn how to draw more just conclusions from better understood facts. Yet still, even at this stage, the world is but an undiscovered country, and, as our horizon widens, we become more and more conscious of dim distances, of which we know nothing; and we find that our best support and safeguard is still that principle of TRUST, which alone preserved us through infancy and childhood up to youth. The world is so large, and we are so small, that not only when we first start upon the unknown voyage of life, but throughout its whole course, even to its close, TRUST must be our pilot through many a dark and stormy night, round many a treacherous headland, past many a Scylla and Charybdis, until we enter the "desired haven."

But all trust is neither wise nor right. A heedless, unreasoning trust is one of the greatest follies of life, and the cause of some of its worst evils. There are four essentials to a well-placed, reliable Trust, and these are—

I. Greater KNOWLEDGE.

II. A larger and more varied EXPERIENCE.

III. A wider OUTLOOK.

IV. Right INTENTION.

I. No human being can discover all things for

himself, nor practically prove the truth of every assertion. He cannot search all the ancient records for his history, and, before doing this, prove their authenticity. He cannot travel all over the world in order to learn geography. He cannot read through the whole mass of English literature before forming an opinion of its characteristics; nor even, when young, the whole of the works and the lengthened biography of a single writer, in order to gain a just idea of his merits. Still less can he rediscover for himself all the facts included in the wide circle of natural science. He must all his life trust, to a large extent, in the greater KNOWLEDGE of others. This is the basis of all education, and the more we recognize this, the more rapid is the advance we shall make in acquiring information, and in arriving at just ideas of things. The trustful learner receives far more of the greater knowledge possessed by the teacher than the critical pupil, who wastes time and intellectual effort in doubts and quibbles.

No honest teacher pretends to be above ignorance and mistake, but every honest teacher possesses a greater knowledge of his subject than his class; and this superiority not only consists in a larger fund of information respecting a special subject—it represents also a wider knowledge of kindred

subjects, and a ripeness of culture, which enable him to estimate the due value of certain facts, and to place them in their relative proportions, so as to produce in the mind a just impression of their comparative importance.

II. A second ground for Trust is a larger and more varied EXPERIENCE of life. Greater knowledge is not always the privilege of age, for the better verification of facts, and better methods of teaching them, often give the advantage in this respect to the younger rather than the elder generation ; but for that practical wisdom, which is necessary for the right conduct of the affairs of life, we must always look to ripeness rather than to immaturity. " Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers," Tennyson tells us ; because we may gain knowledge rapidly, nay, even prematurely, but wisdom is the fruit of a large and varied experience, which can only come to ripeness in its due season. The old proverb says, " Those who live longest see the most ;" because, as years pass on, they can trace in themselves, or in the lives of others, the results, for good or evil, of certain courses of action. They gain a practical acquaintance with the workings of those laws which govern life, and are able to predict, from previous experience, the effects produced by certain

causes. Trust, then, to the guidance founded on a practical experience of the ground over which you are about for the first time to travel, and accept restraints and decisions pronounced by that wisdom which is the late fruit of knowledge.

III. Trust, again, to the wider OUTLOOK won by more advanced progress. It often happens, in making the ascent of a mountain, that one of the party gets far ahead, and as he stands on his vantage-ground, and sees the others loitering doubtfully below, unable to see beyond the shrubs and rocks that enclose the pathway, he cries, "Come on ; work your way round this rock ; push through these shrubs ; you are all right ; I can see how the land lies." Trust the plan of your life to those who see more of the whole geography of it than you can do at present. Our work comes to us at first as little bits of duty, and we cannot see far enough to perceive how these form parts of a great whole ; but, by following the directions given us, we shall find that we are accomplishing a beautiful and grand design. The child Beethoven, toiling in blind obedience through the musical notes and timetable, could not see that these were the essential parts of a sonata ; and the tiny scholar, who every day patiently learns a few of the letters of the

alphabet, has no conception of the fact that it is a combination of these letters which gives lasting expression to a great work of literature. Education is not a piece of "crazy patchwork," in which a little bit of one material is stuck on to something else, a muddle of odds and ends ; but, like all great works, all important processes, all vital, true developments, every step is a part of a grand whole, through which runs a single design, and that is the accomplishment of the ideal. You are occupied in the present with little pieces of work, and some of these are wearisome and difficult, and you think you would like to drop this and give all your time to that ; but trust to the wider outlook, which grasps the whole and sees the necessity of each part to the completion.

IV. It is necessary to a perfect Trust that we should believe that the greater knowledge, the larger experience, and the wider outlook, are also ruled by right INTENTION. It is not, perhaps, too much to say that, at heart, you really are convinced of the purity of motive and honesty of purpose which influence those who have, in any way, the direction of your life. Trust to the right intention of your guides ; believe that, while they devote their best life to you, they have the sincere,

unselfish desire to lead you aright, and to save you from many troubles and snares. But while you credit them with earnestness of purpose in all the arrangements for your training and culture, watch carefully against those little risings of impatience, those foolish, hasty words, which, meaningless as they are, nevertheless sow the seeds of doubt and distrust, and, like "the little rift within the lute," may gradually destroy the harmony of your relations with your parents and teachers, just at that season of life when you most need to be one with them in confidence and trust. No sensible parent or teacher will refuse to listen to any suggestions you may desire to make in regard to the directions given you, but a mere habit of affecting to criticize or object to these is no proof of real independence, because that can only be the result of reasonable and honest convictions.

As we look back upon our past lives to-day, and see how TRUST has been our preserver and leader through many dangers and difficulties, from the time we entered this world until now, the question naturally arises, What shall we cling to when parents and teachers have passed away? Shall we ever become *self-sufficient*? And when our life on earth is ended, and we go out from this world

into "the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns," what knowledge or experience gained here will abide with us, or be of service on our entrance upon a new untried stage of existence? Then, if we think a little, we shall see that we need a fuller trust than any founded on human superiority—a trust resting on a KNOWLEDGE which is not bounded by the limits of earth; an EXPERIENCE extending through eternity; an OUTLOOK which embraces the whole of time and space; and an INTENTION springing out of a perfect and unchanging love. And where can we find sufficient foundation for this supreme, ever-enduring Trust, but in God? He alone is infinite and eternal.

"The ONE remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly."

Trust is the groundwork of those deep convictions of spiritual truths, the outcome of which are the sweet graces of a godly life; for it is Trust which opens the heart to messages from God, and these carry, in themselves, their own immovable proof. Trust recognizes the voice of God, our Father, speaking to us in His Word; in the blessed revelation of Jesus Christ, His Son; in the whispers of conscience, and the stirring of feeling in the depths of our hearts; in all earnest

appeals and faithful teaching ; in the many sounds that come to us from the world around us—the songs of gladness and the dirges of sorrow ; and, in accepting these communications from God in simple, childlike Trust, we gain a practical experience of their Divine origin and incontrovertible truth, which raises us above the passing gusts of criticism and flying seeds of doubt.

VIII.

AUTUMN.¹

“DRAWN from distant homes,” we have once more gathered here to live and work together for another Term ; and as we meet again in this room, where we have so often assembled for words of farewell and of greeting, we look around, and become sensible that, while much remains the same, a constant process of change is going on amongst us. We miss some old familiar faces, which have long been present on these occasions ; and we remember, sadly, that we shall see them here no more. We regret their absence ; while at the same time we realize that school life is but a passage, a limited time of preparation, lying between childhood and the entrance on the wider sphere of the world. Those who have finished their course of study and training here have passed into a life of new responsibilities, new duties ; and

¹ At the opening of the Autumn Term, 1889.

whilst we cherish the memory of their good work, good example, and influence, we cling to the hope that they may still be faithful and steadfast to the best and highest purposes of life, and find, in their homes and in the world, only a larger field for the service of God and of their fellow-creatures.

We see others amongst us to-day who are here for the first time. To them all is new and strange, all speaks of change. Let us give them a true welcome, and make them feel that it is no cold, critical society into which they have entered, but a warm and genial home of happy life and work, amongst kindly and helpful companions; aids to further progress and development. And there are many more who have come back to the old scenes, books, and classes, for whom the outer world seems to have remained the same; yet even these are conscious, if they look within, that change has laid its hand upon them. I suppose none of us can say that we are quite the same as when we began the last Term, six months ago. Some vain hopes and desires have, perhaps, set for ever, and some nobler aspirations have dawned upon us. A higher ideal has risen before us of what we may become and do, and life can never again be the vain and frivolous existence of the past. We have grasped

some new truths, or have come to see new light in old teaching, hitherto dry and dead ; and, in the strength of God, have known something of an honest struggle against evil, and an earnest striving for good. We cannot stand still ; each day of our life is a stepping upwards or a drifting downwards, a victory or a defeat. Some changes must and will pass over us all this Term. What shall they be ? For good or for evil ? For gain or loss ? Let us watch and pray and strive, that the changes of this Term may be of upward, onward progress.

The reality of this constant process of change taking place in us and around us, is at no time brought more vividly before us than at this season of the year. When we leave this room and step out into the world of nature, what a change we see has taken place there since the sunny summer days, when you spent so much time out-of-doors in the clear soft air, under the old trees ! Where are now the flowers of May and June, when the garden was a very "Paradise of blossoms" ? Where are the glories of the time of roses ? All are faded and passed away for ever. Now—

“ My very heart faints and my whole soul grieves
At the moist rich smell of the rotting leaves,
And the breath
Of the fading edges of box beneath,
And the year's last rose.

Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily."

Brightness and Beauty !—loveliness of form, and brilliance or harmony of colour—all those things, which appeal to the eye as the glory of life, are composed of material which has in it the elements of decay. They are but for a season ; and this is not only a moral lesson, but a scientific fact, a law from which there is no escape. If we set our hearts on these material things, disappointment must come in its time ; for even while we delight in them, they are passing away ; our souls cannot live on outward beauty, for the soul is not " by gazing fed," but by Truth, Love, Duty.

An old courtier of Queen Elizabeth's, on retiring from her service, wrote, after the fashion of her time, a sonnet to her Majesty, on his withdrawal from his office in her household. He laments the passing away of the days when he could serve the Queen with loyal activity ; the spring and summer of his life are gone ; but his heart is sound and faithful still ; and in the last lines of his sonnet he sings—

" Beauty, Strength, and Youth !—flowers fading been :
Duty, Love, and Truth are roots—and evergreen."

There is no germ of vitality in the flower ; it is pleasant to the eye for a while ; but the petals drop, the form is lost ; they decay as they fall, the lovely colour is faded. We cast the withered remains from us ; it has served its time, and has been a delight for a while, but now it pleases no longer, and we care for it no more.

The petals fall—but why ? If you remember our Botany Lessons of last Term, you will know that the corolla is but an unimportant part of the plant, although the most beautiful. Beauty is sacrificed here to something more precious—the fruit. As the corolla decays and passes away, the fruit grows and is matured ; and it is not in the lovely blossom, but in the seed, that there lies hidden that wonderful germ of life, upon which time and decay have no power.

One summer-time, more than three thousand years ago, the wheat blossomed in the Nile fields of Egypt, under the cloudless blue and the golden sun. Before a few weeks had passed, these blossoms had fallen into the Nile mud, and their day was over. But the seed-corn remained, matured and ripened, and was gathered in at the harvest into the storehouses of Egypt. And then some of the grains found their way into a mummy-coffin ;

placed there, perhaps, as a symbol of the faith that there is also a germ of life, even in the body sleeping in the tomb. Three thousand years passed away, and the grains lay there, dry and unsightly, yet immortal, until they had passed into a new phase of existence. A zealous Egyptologist broke in upon the silence of those long ages, drew the coffin from the tomb, exhumed the mummy, and planted the wheat in the earth. That autumn, the old corn of the long-forgotten Egyptian summer brought forth fruit; and the life of three thousand years' duration passed into new and more abundant forms. The summer and its flowers are gone; but life is not all summer-time and flowers; there are precious things to be grasped and learned, which have in them germs of enduring vitality, which can never die, and only "suffer change" by passing into forms "more rich and strange." Such is a great truth, laid hold of and made our own, treasured up in the silence of the heart, until its life becomes more and more manifest in fruitful words and deeds. Such is all worthy knowledge, accurately acquired and stored up in the memory, until a time of need calls it into the building up of thought and practical action. Such are habits of self-restraint, learned at first by simple

acts of obedience and self-denial, but having in them a germ of vitality, which may in after-years bring forth fruit in a great victory over temptation, or some self-renouncing work for God and man. And such is the steadfast love of a true heart, which, recognizing all we owe to Christ, our Saviour, and the perfect beauty of His character and life, gives its first and best affections to Him. Simple and feeble at first, born of a gratitude which but dimly recognizes all we owe, there is in such love a germ of immortality, upon which decay has no power; it rises into the strength and faithfulness which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and is victorious over death itself.

"What though the brightness wane, the pleasures fade,
The glory dim? Oh, not of these is made
The awful life that to your trust is given!
Children of God! inheritors of Heaven!
Fail not for weakness, falter not for sin;
But onwards, upwards, till the goal you win.
God guard you! and God guide you on your way,
Young warrior-pilgrims, who set forth to-day!"

Why do we live in a world of change? Because we live in an incomplete, imperfect world. Without change there cannot be progress. In a poem of George Herbert's, he laments the death of a

“sweet rose, angry and brave,” in its brilliant crimson. “Thou must die,” he sighs. But if the roses of these old summers had not passed away, and were the roses of to-day, the flower would never have advanced beyond the small, almost scentless blossoms we see sometimes in old-fashioned gardens. “The old order changeth, yielding place to new.” Arthur’s ideal realm falls to pieces in that last gloomy battle by the dreary winter sea ; but the sun rises again, bringing the New Year ; and the kingdom of God is established in England on a surer foundation than that of Arthur’s knighthood. It is not only the fair and lovely things of earth that must pass away. If roses die, so also must weeds and all poisonous, noxious growths. The sentence of everlasting death is passed on “all things that do offend.” You know how in autumn the smoke and scent of the burning weeds is wafted on the air ; and how the withered leaves are swept away as they fall, and are carried off to be burned. Death and destruction are the agents of God’s mercy in purifying the world of its evils. It is often difficult for us to understand this, because sometimes we cannot see how things, which appear to us as harmless, need to be removed ; nor can we realize

how their place may be taken by something better.

Trials and losses often seem to deprive us of what we have esteemed our greatest pleasures, or even our highest good. And yet, perhaps, they are designed, like the cleansing fires of autumn, to destroy some sin within us, or to remove some support on which we have leaned, and thus teach us to look up to God, and find a Father and a Friend in Him.

As we walk the garden paths and avenues in these sombre autumn days, the eye rests on dying flowers and fallen leaves ; but the ear is struck by a bright, cheerful little song. Not a note of despondency or regret is in its clear, sweet trills. No lark, "blithesome and cumberless," in the heyday of spring sunshine, sends forth a song more full of

"Such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss."

It is the dear little robin redbreast, singing in the cold damp bush, and speaking to our hearts of the joys of Faith—Faith, which looks not "at the things which are seen, but at those which are unseen."

He sings to us of a heart-happiness, which does

not depend on bright skies, sunshine, gay scenes, and every material comfort and provision.

He sings of a courage which can do and bear, which does not shrink and mourn over every disturbance of pleasure or ease. His brave little spirit fears not the coming winter, and all its anxieties as to provision for the flesh, any more than it dwells with weak regrets on the summer days and their abundant supply of food and warmth.

He sings of perfect Trust; and his tender, happy notes almost seem as if he heard in his little heart the voice of Jesus, saying, "They sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them."

And he sings a song of Victory—the victory of Life over Death. "The spring is coming again," he says; "life will reassert itself and triumph over decay and death; and so it will be year after year, until at last Death shall have accomplished his work, and the winter of earth shall pass away for ever."

IX.

LITTLE THINGS.¹

WE have just begun the work of another Term ; and it is also the first Term of a new year. You will, therefore, no doubt, have brought to the commencement of this fresh period of life and work many of those aspirations and resolutions with which we generally enter upon a new division of time. You wish and hope that this year may be marked by greater progress, richer gains, more faithfulness to duty ; and in order that these golden visions of the future may not "die away, and fade into the light of common day," but become substantial realities, I want to remind you now at starting of one very important essential to the carrying out of all ideal aims, and that is—the most careful attention to LITTLE THINGS.

There are two or three mistakes which are often made in regard to little things. We may so devote

¹ At the opening of the Lent Term, 1890.

ourselves to them, as to take them for the aim and purpose of life, instead of looking at them as only necessary to the accomplishment and perfection of greater matters. We may even sacrifice to them all that is higher and superior, so as to dwarf the whole of our nature, until we become only fitted for a life of drudgery or frivolity.

On the other hand, we may fall into the equally serious mistake of ignoring the relation of little things to great; and be ambitious of high attainments, whilst we are neglecting the very details which are essential to the completeness, stability, and perfection of every kind of work. What is it which makes our own bodily frame so enduring, and so unerring in all its functions? It is simply the exquisite and delicate finish of all its most minute parts. If one little organ were defective, or one little duct or nerve omitted, the noble schemes of the greatest hero, or the conceptions of the highest genius, would fail to be carried into effect.

There is another common mistake in regard to little things which we must notice; and that is the idea that it is the special duty of some persons to attend to these alone, while others are to concern themselves only with subjects of a wider range and

having greater results. This mistake has led to wrong views of education ; so that instead of regarding it as the common privilege of all intelligent beings, possessing that God-given faculty of growth and development, it has been weighed out in quantities, supposed to be proportioned to the probable future sphere and duties of the special class to which the pupil is considered to belong. But education is more than an equipment for the practical work of life ; and, moreover, we none of us quite know beforehand what that may be, for it is God Who appoints our life for us ; but there is one thing of which we may feel very certain, and it is this—there is nothing which God will call us to do, for which ignorance and unreason are a better preparation, than knowledge and intelligence. The greatest mind must acknowledge and respond to the claims of small duties ; while, if our sphere should be always limited to “the trivial round, the common task,” we shall find these little inactivities ennobling, just in the measure that we are able to see their relation to greater things. As far as my own observation and experience go, I can truly say, both as regards school work and home work, that it is not the more intelligent and better-informed girls who despise and neglect little things. Luxury

and self-indulgence, with those habits of laziness and inattention to duty which follow in their train, are far more responsible for slovenliness and omission of details, than are superior advance in intelligence and knowledge ; and I think you will bear me out in this.

Let us now try to see what are some of the little things connected with our school work and life to which it concerns us to pay close attention this Term.

I. THE SPELLING, WRITING, AND PRONUNCIATION OF OUR MOTHER-TONGUE. I do not know whether it is the result of so much attention being paid to foreign languages, or whether it may be one of the manifestations of that general impatience of laws and rules which prevails in the present day ; but certainly there is much less care and attention bestowed now than formerly on the little niceties of speaking and writing. And yet these are among the little things which have an intimate connection with greater matters. We may think that the words we use, and the way we spell or speak them, are of small moment compared with the ideas, of which they are only the clothing. This is quite true. But there is always a beauty in correctness and finish, which of itself awakens a sensation of

pleasure ; whereas slovenliness excites naturally a feeling of repulsion. Some writers and speakers find readers and listeners simply on account of the attractiveness of their style. And there is no doubt that not only the charm of what we may say or write is greatly dependent on the little refinements of language, but, what is still more important, the influence of our thoughts and feelings is much more felt when the expression of them is clear, correct, and elegant. We want to lay hold at once of the ear or the eye ; for people seldom take the trouble to listen to mumbled, half-enunciated words, or to read misspelt, illegible writing.

Another connection between these little details of correct speaking and writing and more important results, is the fact that every one who neglects these is responsible for aiding in the general deterioration of our English language—that language made sacred to us by all the precious treasures of literature enshrined in it, and which ought surely to be carefully guarded by us, and handed down uncorrupted and intact to generations yet to come.

II. THE TAKING OF NOTES AT LECTURES AND CLASSES. This is a small matter compared with the information itself, which the notes help you to

retain, and work up for yourselves in exercises and examinations ; yet much of the accuracy of the knowledge, and its use to you in the future, depend on the skill you can acquire in taking clear, concise notes of what is really important, and in spelling these correctly and writing them legibly. I hope to give a few lessons this Term on the taking of notes only.

III. *LITTLE PUNCTUALITIES.* A moment's delay in prompt attention to bells and gongs often seems a trifle of no consequence ; but in an organized life, such as ours is here, the smallest irregularity affects the whole machinery. If one little star dawdled a moment in its course, the whole universe would be disturbed and thrown out of order ; and it has often happened, both in the history of nations and in the lives of individuals, that one moment's delay has been the cause of vast and far-reaching consequences. It is quite true that great events may not always hang on little unpunctualities, but there are certain other important results which follow these small failures of exactness in regard to time, as surely as the fruit succeeds the flower. In the first place, the want of instant attention to the call of duty creates a habit of indifference to its demands, so

that the will ceases to respond by immediate action. The little hesitations and delays are concessions to inclination and slothfulness, and by yielding constantly to these, the moral energy of the character becomes enfeebled, and loses its vigour, as the impulse and ruler of the will.

Little unpunctualities also foster a selfish disregard to what is due to others, for it seldom happens that they affect ourselves alone ; but the indulgence of a few minutes' laziness, or the continuing for a moment to pursue some occupation, is only purchased at the cost of inconvenience and annoyance to other people.

Selfishness and indifference to the claims of duty are faults serious enough to call forth every effort, in order to break through the habit of little unpunctualities.

IV. *LITTLE COURTESIES.* In the fulness and hurry of the life of the present time, there is great danger of thinking too lightly of the value of these little acts of consideration and respect in our intercourse with one another. Little courtesies are more than the merely external details of ceremony and observance ; like the delicate little blossoms which beautify the dark surface of the earth, they have their roots in substantial and enduring soil. They

spring from some of the deepest and best feelings of our nature—respect for superiority, kindness, delicacy, magnanimity; and the omission of little courtesies indicates that real refinement of character is also wanting. What can be more essentially vulgar, for instance, than the primary idea of establishing our own superiority by not thanking a servant for any little attentions; or of balancing against them the money paid as wages? And what meaner attempt at self-assertion can be made than by purposely omitting those little marks of respect, by which we express our sense of the honour due to a superior, in order that we may thereby maintain the notion of our own equality? Little courtesies are the truthful development of a just sense of the fitness of things; and this refined instinct, or what the French call *savoir faire*, is one of the greatest attractions in a woman: whatever other gifts she may possess, whether of mind or form, if she be wanting in this, she loses her greatest charm.

In what do little courtesies consist? In attention to the wants of others—at table, in the study, in class; in regard for their feelings—avoiding everything which glorifies self at the expense of another, and all expressions of contempt and ridicule; in

respect for others—giving them precedence, addressing them correctly, listening attentively, answering letters, returning calls, and in conforming to the usages of society.

The affectation of superiority to these things is either an evidence of an arrogant disposition, or it displays ignorance in regard to those fundamental principles on which alone we can live together in society, and carry on pleasant intercourse with one another.

V. LITTLE NEATNESSES. What we call neatness, as applied to the details of dress, the person, rooms, and the various little affairs connected with domestic life, has precisely the same meaning as the terms “finish” and “proportion,” when applied to the higher objects of art. Neatness is simply the aiming at perfection in the little matters of everyday life. “What is worth doing at all is worth doing well ;” and why ? Because even these small things have their ideal of perfection, which we are bound to seek ; and in striving to attain this, we are raising our aims, and quickening our artistic sense of completeness and correctness. Neatness, like all little things, is the beginning of something greater ; and as long as we do not limit our sphere to ourselves and our material surround-

ings, we need not fear that attention to little neatnesses will tend to make us precise and petty-minded. Neatness has its roots in character. A room will tell us a good deal of the person who occupies it. Untidiness, disorder, overdone or grotesque decorations, speak for themselves; whilst neatness, simplicity, and good taste are the reflection of a pure, well-governed mind, creating for itself its own environment.

“ The spirit of contentment, maiden dear,
Is breathing in thy very atmosphere ;
I feel it sway me, while I linger here,
The *sense of neatness* felt in everything—
The little table with its covering ;
And everywhere around the hand I trace
That makes a paradise of any place.”

If the room is the index of the mind, still more may we say in regard to the dress and appearance of the individual, “We understand her by her sight.” The little touches, which give the finish of neatness to personal adornment, show at once the bent of a mind which cannot rest satisfied in slovenliness and imperfection. Fancy an angel in a torn and crumpled robe ! But why is the suggestion so incongruous ? Simply because we cannot conceive the idea of inward perfection, even in a spiritual being, which does not also express itself in the outward appearance.

VI. LITTLE ACTS OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE.

Let us not overlook the importance of these.

“Little things, on little wings,
May lift our souls to heaven.”

Many of the means by which God gives light and grace to our souls are in themselves small and insignificant ; and we often make no progress on our heavenward course, because, while we are waiting for some gale of spiritual life to waft us onwards, we are making no use of the little breezes as they come and go. The few words of Scripture read thoughtfully every day, the few utterances of earnest daily prayer, the simple attempt to gain help and light from the ordinary services of the Church, and from the customary religious instruction, may be more blest of God than attendance at a stately function, or at the sermon of a celebrated preacher.

Remember, lastly, that all little duties are great, because they demand the exercise of that most heroic virtue, FAITHFULNESS—that virtue which our Lord saw to be the test of all worth of character or ability for usefulness, and which must be first shown in little things—“ He that is faithful in that *which is least* is faithful also in much ;” and it is this little faithfulness which is approved of Christ

in those words which are the very crown of all rewards and honours, "Well done, good and faithful servant ; because thou hast been faithful in a *very little*, I will make thee ruler over many things."

X.

THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD.¹

LAST Christmas, just at the season when our hearts are most sensible of that bond of love which unites all humanity in relationship to Christ, a little book was published, called "The Greatest Thing in the World." It is a beautiful and practical commentary on the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, in which S. Paul, comparing Love with its sister graces of Faith and Hope, shows that the greatest of these is Love. That this little book touched a true chord, existing in nearly every heart, is shown by the fact that in a few weeks thousands of copies were sold. All who read it were probably already persuaded of the excellency of charity; but the very sense of its beauty and worth led them all the more to value the help which this little book gives in the practical carrying out of the principle of love in

¹ At the opening of the Summer Term, 1890.

the little acts and words of the "trivial round, the common task."

No doubt we all desire to live more kindly, loving lives, in which we may more perfectly fulfil the law of Christ ; but the reason why the feeling has often only a sentimental existence, and not a real, practical, working life, is because we do not always see the opportunities, as they occur, for putting the greatest of all graces into the exercise of kindness and sympathy in our relations with one another every day.

We admire the high self-sacrificing love which takes men and women from homes of ease and luxury to work among the lowest poor ; but S. John asks, How can a man love God Whom he hath not seen, when he loveth not his brother whom he hath seen ? and still more may we ask, How can he really love his brothers so far removed from him in sympathy and life, when he shows little love for those who are nearest to him, and with whom he is in daily intercourse ?

It is in the little community in which we are now living that we begin, by thoughtfulness and self-denial, to learn those lessons of love which may afterwards carry us up to the sublimer heights of self-sacrifice. . The surging waves of sentiment

can never really lift us there ; it is only by the little steps of practical, unselfish love, that we ascend day by day, through little self-denials and little kindnesses, until we reach the higher elevations of a perfect love.

I want to help you, if I can, at the beginning of this new Term, to find out some of the little occasions, which occur in your everyday life at school, when you may bring into active exercise this great and beautiful grace of love. You need not wait long for such opportunities to arise ; there is one, which meets you directly we re-assemble, and begin a new season of life and work together ; so we will take this first.

At the beginning of each Term there are always a certain number of "new girls," who have left, perhaps for the first time, the kindly warmth of their own homes, and find themselves "companionless, among new scenes, strange faces, other minds." Here is a special call for the practice of that charity which "is kind." There are many little ways in which you can welcome the strangers, and make them feel that they have entered a community of friendly companions, ready to receive them as associates in the great work in which we are all engaged.

Hasty intimacies and incautious confidences are at all times to be avoided ; but school life affords many opportunities for the cultivation of that ease of manner with strangers, and that power of maintaining pleasant surface conversation, which is so charming and helpful afterwards in general society, and in which girls brought up at home are often deficient. Begin at once to try to interest a new girl in the life going on around her, and to help her to understand the ways and customs of the house. Talk to her at table, draw her into the games in the garden, and make her your companion in the daily walk. And here, perhaps, I may make a little practical suggestion of how you may often put into exercise the grace of love, if you resolve, in making your walking engagements with favourites and friends, that you will always leave one day in the week clear for taking as your companion any one who does not happen to be provided with a partner for the walk. It requires a little effort of self-denial to withdraw one's self from the society of an old and intimate friend, with whom we can always pour out "heart affluence in discursive talk," and try to make conversation instead with a companion who is almost a stranger ; but I feel sure the effort would be

oftener made, if we only realized that in every stranger Christ appeals to us for kindness—"I was a Stranger, and ye took Me in;" "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Another feature of school life is the variety of characters amongst which we are called to live, and the diversity of opinions we must necessarily hear expressed; and when we take into account the number of different families from which the pupils at any one time in the school are drawn, and the various circumstances and influences under which they have been trained, we see that this must be so in any community such as ours. Now, this fact in itself affords occasion for a twofold development of the grace of love—for the love which tolerates diversity, and the love which holds fast to personal convictions of truth and right.

First, we have occasions in our school life for practising a tolerant charity, or the "love which suffereth long, and is kind;" and this is shown when we listen calmly and patiently to opinions different from our own; when we check ill-natured prejudices; and especially when we exercise a firm restraint upon that narrow spirit of criticism



and unkind censoriousness, which is so contrary to the mind of Christ.

And, secondly, it is this mixing with others which affords us opportunity for practising that love which, even for their sakes, makes us courageous and steadfast to what we believe to be true and right. This is the love which "rejoiceth in the truth;" which makes us independent of prevailing currents, and watchful over every word and act, lest we should unwarily seem to countenance and encourage what we believe to be wrong, and thus help to confirm others in error or evil.

And how can we show this love? Not by holding ourselves aloof in cold reserve; but by pleasant and kindly, though honest, expression of our opinion; sometimes publicly, but more often, perhaps, in a quiet talk with some one or two companions. Do not fear that they will fail to recognize that it is love for them which makes you firm and faithful to your own convictions. People always do see and feel when you have their interests at heart; just as they also come to see and to despise, after a while, that vain selfish craving for popularity, which makes a person weak and cowardly.

Again, the conditions of school life give frequent

occasions for the practice of that generous love which "envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Without this grace, the school may become a field for many unhappy rivalries ; for as in the great world, of which it is in some respects a miniature, perfect equality is impossible. There must always be some who stand first intellectually ; others who are richer, more admired, or are more popular, than the majority. It is one of love's most splendid victories when, without a pang of envy or jealousy, we can see others above us in these matters, and feel no ill-will, or desire to displace them. And the victory is almost as great, when love overcomes all selfish, vain elation in those who stand the first, and extinguishes contempt for the less gifted and successful, by the sweetness of its sympathy and tender feeling with every beating human heart.

The love which "envieth not, nor vaunteth not itself," will be watchful against every element of discord. A very small matter often becomes the occasion of much offence ; and school life gives frequent opportunities for the exercise of long-suffering and forbearance. A number of persons cannot live together without some friction ; and with all our care not to be "easily provoked," little

causes of annoyance must sometimes occur. Then is the time to practise the *forgiveness of love*; and only love can teach us how to forgive sincerely and nobly. It is hard to forgive another without an inward sense, often shown outwardly, of our own superiority to the offender, and almost a desire that he should feel humbled by it. Brown- ing says—

“ And man’s forgiveness may be true and sweet,
But yet he *stoops* to give it. Only Heaven
Means crowned, not vanquished, when it says forgiven !”

Still love will teach us by its own delicacy of feeling the best ways of showing forgiveness, and it will often tell us that forgiveness may be better indicated than spoken. Attempts at formal reconciliation frequently lead to new offences. It is better sometimes to say nothing, but to seize the first opportunity of returning good for evil by some little winning act of kindness.

Speech may be “silvern, but silence is golden;” and especially is this true in regard to the discussion amongst our special friends of any wrong which we have received, or fancy we have received. S. Peter would never have forgiven his brother seven times, if he had first talked over his wrongs with all the people he knew, and thus made a

party for himself to support him in the quarrel ; and when he came to Christ, to complain to Him of his brother's conduct, S. Peter would never have learned the fulness of a generous love, if our Lord had taken up the quarrel on the side of His disciple, instead of bidding him forgive his brother again, not only "seven times, but seventy times seven."

There is in all communities the tendency to take sides and make parties ; and sometimes these are formed on the most trifling grounds, until the whole society is divided into hostile factions. The knowledge of this tendency, and the mischief and unhappiness of such divisions, should make us watchful how we add fuel to a little fire by a too eager partisanship, and teach us rather to seek the "blessedness" of "the peacemakers : for they shall be called the children of God."

There is much which might be said on the silence of love, and the way in which it checks the flow of gossip and personal unkind remarks. "Love thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, believeth all things, hopeth all things." If we desire to possess "the greatest thing in the world," we must be prepared to give up for its sake the habit of criticizing, and talking over other people, when no

purpose is to be answered by this, excepting the indulgence of a love of ridicule and censoriousness. The Divine flower of all the graces cannot grow in the same heart with these noxious weeds—gossip and satire—because they so harden and impoverish the soil, that nothing beautiful and fruitful can spring up beside them.

Let us watch this Term for all the opportunities we can find for carrying out the principle of love in our school life, as a duty and a service, in which we follow Christ. The more we know Him, the more we love Him; the more we are like Christ, the more kind, considerate, and tender we shall be in all our conduct towards one another; not only to those whom we choose as friends, but to every human being with whom we have to do: for all with us are the children of God, and in every one Christ appeals to us, "Do this for Me; inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye do it unto Me."

XI.

REVERENCE.¹

EVERY teacher ought to be "like unto a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." It is out of that old storehouse of immortal treasures that I am now going to bring out one, which I want you to grasp, and hold for your own this Term. This is Reverence. What is Reverence? You think of it, perhaps, as an old custom of paying veneration to certain persons and things, which the greater truth and courage of the present generation have dropped. It is quite true that a better education has developed a greater love of truth, and has inspired a firmer courage in exposing delusions and casting down false idols, so that many things which were once objects of reverence we can no longer honestly venerate. But this does not prove that ignorance and unreason were originally the cause

¹ At the opening of the Autumn Term, 1890.

of reverence, nor does it suggest that truth and courage have produced the tendency to irreverence. It only shows that education helps us to fix reverence on real and worthy objects.

If we know anything of that emotion which is awakened when our eyes are opened to the sight of what is great, beautiful, and pure—when, perhaps, for the first time, we rise to see that true aspect of things to which we have hitherto been blind—we need no arguments to convince us that Reverence is no mere outward, artificial custom, belonging to the past, but that it is an essential element in every true nature; and if it has been wanting in exercise, it has simply been because we have been blind to those things which ought naturally to inspire it.

“We needs must love the Highest *when we see it.*” Irreverence is the failure to see the Highest. We lose the faculty of Reverence, because our eyes are not opened to the higher aspects of things, which we despise simply because we have been looking at them with dim or distorted vision.

Reverence, like humility, is the result of clearer insight; it is called into exercise by the flashing upon the mind of the very truth.

The vivid sight of the actual truth, while it

exercises and cultivates Reverence, may sometimes teach us to modify, or transfer the emotion to other objects ; and thus we find, from age to age, that some things are held in less or more veneration at one time than another ; but, on the other hand, there are certain objects which, whenever we see them in their true light, ought always to inspire in us the tenderest emotions of Reverence, and it is also essential to our best life at all times that we should learn so to regard them.

These are—OURSELVES ; OUR FELLOW-CREATURES ; and OUR GOD.

I. OURSELVES. But, we may ask, the more we see the truth about ourselves, shall we not find the less reason for the reverence of self? This question arises out of the error of mistaking self-conceit for reverence. Truth may indeed teach us that there is more cause within us than we suspected for humility ; but humility and irreverence are two totally different things, as distinct as are self-conceit and reverence. It is when we come to see what we are in our origin, and in the destiny which God has ordained for us, that we are filled with solemn reverence for self ; it is when we are only looking at what we have made of ourselves, and at the path we have chosen for

ourselves, that we learn to scoff at goodness and to despair of every high desire. This reckless irreverence is the result of blindness to the great realities of our existence. Let us try to get a sight of those truths, the very glimpse of which should inspire us with tender, solemn, yet joyful feelings of reverence for ourselves.

1. *Our Origin.* We do not come out of nothingness into this world—

“ But trailing clouds of glory, do we come
From God, Who is our Home.”

We are the children of the Most High, partakers of the Divine Nature, not merely the work of His hands. Even in our humanity, we are of the same nature and race as Jesus Christ the Lord, “ Who sitteth at the right hand of God,” and is One with the Father. We have been redeemed by His Incarnation and the sacrifice of Himself, from the slavery of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Think how valuable must be that, which is worth such a countless cost !

2. *Our Destiny.* There lies before us a future of boundless possibilities, through which we may advance to still higher stages of being ; for we are endowed with intellectual and spiritual faculties, which have in them that essential principle

of all life—the power of growth and development ; and these faculties, unlike the forms of life in the material world, possess a vitality which is immortal. Christ has opened to us a sphere in which all our highest nature finds its true environment ; and therefore we are told that “now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be.” We cannot even lift our eyes to those heights which lie before us in the future.

The indwelling sense of all this must fill us with an abiding spirit of reverence for ourselves, and the constant presence of this feeling will influence and elevate our whole lives. It will especially be manifested in two directions—in dignity of character and conduct, and in the diligent use of every means of self-improvement.

It is when we forget our birthright, and are blind to its privileges, that we are ready to allow ourselves any folly, and to rush without restraint into a life of reckless pleasure-seeking. The sense of reverence for ourselves will make us watchful over all we do or say, that we may never dishonour the greatness of our origin. It will be a constant check upon all that is low, mean, and unworthy ; even our manners and our dress will express the feeling of reverence for ourselves and our own repute.

It is when we forget what we are, and the destiny which lies before us, that we become indifferent or negligent in regard to those means of self-improvement which education affords us. We are satisfied with ignorance, frivolity, or stupidity ; and it is possible to become so blind as to regard the talents God has given us with irreverence. It was irreverence, and not humility, which led the unprofitable servant to despise the talent his lord had given him, and to bury it, with hard thoughts of his master, in the earth, disdainng his service, and treating his gifts with contempt.

II. OUR FELLOW-CREATURES. Our reverence for others is claimed in three ways. First, because they, like us, are the children of God, our brethren ; secondly, because some of them are our superiors in all that makes men greatest ; and thirdly, because some of them stand in certain positions in relation to us, which are those of rightful authority, and reverence is due to these persons as holding these positions in the social community.

I. The ground on which reverence is due to every human being is beautifully expressed by Fröbel, that great student of human nature, when he says of every little child that it is "a thought of God." And when we fully realize this, and try

to look for that thought of God in every one with whom we come into association, and to bring ourselves into touch and sympathy with this, it will be impossible for us to indulge at the same time in scoffs and sneers, and unkind criticisms of one another. These are the fruit of irreverence, which is blind to what is highest, and only sees, or perhaps only fancies it sees, what is petty and mean. It was this "thought of God" which Christ recognized in every human being that came to Him, and it was because His eyes were open to perceive this, that He was in sympathy with all; while the blind Pharisees, who saw only the evil, said, "This Man receiveth *sinner*s, and eateth with them."

2. Whilst we "honour all men," some have a special claim to our reverence, because they are greatly our superiors in goodness or intellect. Such are the heroes of literature, science, and art; great statesmen, warriors, and patriots; and the "noble army of martyrs" in the Church. Reverence for these great men is, again, the result of seeing in them that larger measure and fuller development of "the thought of God," which is more feebly manifest in smaller, weaker natures. Hero-worship is the worship of the Divine element in the human, for whatever is far-seeing, strong,

and noble, reminds us of God ; but we must not mistake for reverence the petty desire to know all the little life of a great man, nor the wish to see and meet him because he is famous, and we like to be able to talk of this to others. It is the spirit of irreverence which leads to so much idle curiosity about the common details of a great man's life. A French wit has said, "No man is a hero to his *valet-de-chambre* ;" and when we have reduced ourselves to the position of a *valet-de-chambre*, we shall not be likely to recognize and reverence the Divine in the hero, but shall rather delight in gossiping over his petty defects and weaknesses.

3. Reverence is, again, due to certain individuals, quite apart from their personal superiority, on account of the position they hold in relation to ourselves.

This kind of reverence is chiefly shown in attention to certain ceremonies and observances, which custom has established, as a fitting expression of it ; but because these are for the most part external, we are not to conclude that they are mere hollow forms, with no warrant in them of inner truth and honest meaning.

The reverence paid to the sovereign is due to

her position at the head of the State ; and however much we may respect Queen Victoria as a woman, this is not the ground on which rules of Court etiquette are justified and demanded.

In these days of progressive education, it may well happen that the younger generation may have more knowledge and keener intelligence than the elder ; but this in no way affects the reverence due from children to their parents, because the obedience as well as the outward forms of respect are demanded by their superior position as the head of the family.

The same holds good also in regard to the position of heads of schools, teachers, rulers in the State, the clergy, employers, and all who hold a superior relation to us by virtue of place or office ; and the order of all organized society depends on due recognition of this.

III. It may seem, perhaps, almost unnecessary to speak of the reverence due to OUR GOD ; and yet that same blindness, which fails to see the highest in ourselves and in our fellow-creatures, often closes the eyes to those revelations of God which are everywhere around us and within us. Irreverence dims that Divine vision of God, revealed to us in our own inner consciousness by

that "light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It conceals from our view the Divine presence of God, working in the events of human life and in the process of nature ; it diverts our eyes from the clearer revelation of God unveiled to us in Holy Scripture ; and it makes us blind even to that supreme discovery of God granted to us in Christ—"God manifest in the flesh."

"We needs must love the Highest when we see it ;" but again irreverence fails to see it, and is even ready to suggest that there is no HIGHEST.

The first step towards reverence for God is humbly to yield ourselves to every revelation we have of Him, for the meaning of outward signs and shows of reverence is that we do thus see and acknowledge His presence. Here is the starting-point, and how shall we win this? How do we find anything we want? By looking for it in all places where it is likely to be discovered ; and if we are in earnest we seek, not in order that we may satisfy ourselves whether it is there or not, but in order to find it. Seek for God in the depths of your own consciousness, in the events of life, in the material world, in His Holy Word, and, above all, in Christ—not that you may discuss the

question, and decide whether these are revelations of God or not; but seek that you may find Him; seek for Him as a child calls for his father, because he loves him and needs his care and help, and not because he wants to know if he really has a father, and whether he is in this place or that. Reverence, like faith, begins with the opening of our eyes to the consciousness of our relation to God, the Most High; and as we realize this we learn to feel a tender reverence for everything which is in any way associated with this most precious experience.—the Word of God, the services and sacraments of His Church, prayers, hymns, the teachings of those who already see and know more of Him. These things, which once, perhaps, may have seemed but empty forms and meaningless words, become to us so full of light and meaning, that we are ready to exclaim, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and *I knew it not*. . . . How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

It is difficult to speak very simply of so high a subject, and perhaps I have said some things which you may not at once understand; but I ask you to read over carefully this little address, and try to see for yourselves how real and true a

feeling Reverence is, and how essential it is to the growth of all the best powers of both mind and soul. Godliness, faith, charity, courtesy, self-improvement, and personal dignity, all have their roots in Reverence ; and it also constitutes that depth of intellectual soil, which forms the good ground out of which knowledge springs up and bears a rich harvest of good fruit.

We need more light, more knowledge. Let us seek for these this Term with a thoughtful, reverent spirit ; so that by God's blessing our school may be a fruitful field of "whatsoever things are true, lovely, and of good report."

" Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of Reverence in us dwell ;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before."

FAREWELLS



I.

HOME.¹

THERE is one word which is uppermost in your hearts to-night—the dear old word *home*—“sweet, sweet home.” And no doubt, during the last few days, you have often been saying to yourselves, “There is no place like home.”

It is not always a good plan to analyze happiness; it is better very often simply to enjoy it. But sometimes, when happiness necessarily consists of certain elements, it is well to ask ourselves what these are, in order that, if we are in any way responsible for their existence, we may do our best to secure their presence. Therefore, as much of the happiness of your homes during the next few weeks will depend on what you contribute to the family life, it is well, perhaps, to try to see what are the essentials of home happiness. There are, I think, five things which are generally necessary.

¹ At the close of the Autumn Term, 1887.

I. LOVE.

II. OBEDIENCE.

III. CONTENTMENT.

IV. The enjoyment of a COMMON LIFE.

V. The maintenance of INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE.

I. LOVE is the first element of home happiness, which greets and welcomes us on our entrance into this world. All the love of the household gathers round the little unconscious infant, who has just been added to the family. What preparations have been made for its reception, and with what delight every one is ready to wait upon it! And home love is also the most enduring affection; it is a love which is unshaken by change, or time, or distance; even the many waters of sin and folly cannot quench that deep, warm, tender love, which is always ready to greet us in our home. What are all caprices, admirations, fancies, sentiments, compared with this?

II. The second element of home happiness is OBEDIENCE. It is the sense of order, law, and government which is the secret of England's greatness, and this is first learnt in a true English home. Obedience to parents was taught by God from Mount Sinai; it was insisted on again by

Christ in His teaching ; and is enjoined by S. Paul and S. Peter in their Epistles. We have also the example of Christ in His home at Nazareth, where we are told He was "subject to His parents." Home obedience is a duty founded on Divine authority, and it is thus ordained, because in every well-ordered community there must be a recognized head, and fixed rules and arrangements. Now, in a family there is no question as to who is to be this head. It belongs of natural undisputed right to the parents. It is not a question of who is the cleverest, best-informed person in the household. If it were true that the elder generation always knew more and was wiser than the younger, then the world would be going backward instead of forward ; and we know that this is not so, but that we are born into "a light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

"For I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

Parents may happen to have little intellectual ability, and small advantages of education, and yet they may have clever children to whom they have generously given all the best mental training and instruction of the present day ; but they are still just as much the heads of the family, and

their sons and daughters owe them obedience ; because the headship of the family is an authority derived from position, and not from any individual superiority. The distance between Christ the Divine Son, and Joseph and Mary the heads of the family at Nazareth, was far greater than any individual superiority which can be claimed by the most talented, the most highly educated child of any human parents. Yet our Lord recognized that in His earthly home His position was that of subjection to those who were the natural, rightful heads of the family. There is also one respect in which parents may be said to have always a great advantage over their children, and that is in that most important kind of wisdom, which can only be learnt by experience acquired during many years of life in this world, and which young people cannot claim to possess. And obedience here often means the best and highest wisdom on the part of the child.

III. A third essential of home happiness is **CONTENTMENT**. One grumbler in a household often makes home life something to endure rather than to enjoy ; and very often this grumbler, who disturbs and upsets every one, is just the spoiled child of the family. The loving care with which

parents shield you from the smallest inconvenience, and the abundant means which enable them to gratify all your desires, tend to foster the feeling that you have a right to the best of everything, and must never be exposed to the most trifling contradictions or annoyances; till you fancy that you were sent into the world to be ministered unto, and not to minister to others.

Strive against the spirit of discontent with any of the arrangements of your home life. There is nothing more trying to the love of your parents, and to their pleasure in your society at home, than to find you grumbling at what they have prepared and arranged for you, or at the customs and ways of your old home life.

Above all, check the least beginning of a spirit of discontent in regard to the members of your family—father, mother, brothers, sisters. Perhaps you will think such a suggestion altogether unnecessary, but while there is such a widespread tendency to criticism and censoriousness in modern society, there is great danger lest this evil habit should enter even the sacred enclosure of the home. Carefully avoid, therefore, the talking over of the members of your own family with others, or indeed with one another. You will find

that even the strength of family love is undermined by indulging in the odious habit of ridicule and fault-finding; for a sharp eye for the defects of those among whom we live soon lessens our esteem for them, and the loss of esteem means the degradation of love.

It is a blessed thing for us that God has not given to us the choice of our family relations, and that we cannot change our home when any trifle is not just according to our mind; because love in this case is not the victim of fastidious taste and restless caprice, but is ruled and prompted by the nobler impulse of duty. All our best love, the highest, the most constant, thoughtful, and true, is in closest relation with duty. Duty is its safeguard, its supporter, its strength and stay. Let us thank God that the love which is the foundation of family life is not the impulse of choice, but the result of natural affection, sustained and quickened by the sense of what these relations claim from us; and let us watch carefully lest we should crush the fair flower of family love by the ruthless handling of a critical, discontented spirit.

IV. The life of a family is that of a COMMUNITY, and it is essential to the happiness of home that we should fully recognize this. A home is not a

mere boarding-house, where people eat and drink together, and then separate for different pursuits and pleasures, each going his own way, indifferent to each other's interests or occupations. It often happens that when you first return home, after some months' absence at school, you find it a little difficult to throw yourself at once into the current of the family life, which has been flowing on for some time without you ; and there is a temptation to begin to follow out your own favourite studies and plans, instead of endeavouring to take up the common subjects of interest in your family with sympathy and cheerful zeal. But the fact is that you ought to do more than this ; for in coming back into your home, you should set yourself at once to bring into the common life of the family a new element of freshness and brightness. We all want to exert ourselves more to provide really good, clever home amusements for family recreation, and to trust less to the paid providers of entertainments. If by your own ability and liveliness you can make your home the centre of your pleasures, you will be doing a good work, the full importance of which you can scarcely at present understand.

I believe girls lose much, and gain little, by taking part personally in rough physical exercises

and athletic sports ; but there is a kind of interest and sympathy which you can show in the amusements of your brothers which it is very pleasant and inspiring to them to receive, though you do not attempt to emulate them in strength and muscular activity.

V. Whilst you take your part in the common life of the family, and add your share to its occupations and amusements, you must not lose sight of the fact, of which I have often reminded you in your school life, that each member of every community has also an **INDIVIDUAL, INDEPENDENT LIFE**, the centre of which is God. We must seek truth for ourselves ; we must be faithful to the dictates of our own conscience ; we must never cease to strive earnestly for our own growth and development. And in order to be true to these duties, you must maintain always your individual independence. An easy-going concurrence in all that is taking place around you, and the unremitting performance of little domestic and social duties, are not the whole of life. Mary chose the good part, when she detached herself awhile from these, even at a busy time, to sit at Jesus' feet and hear His word. The general tone and elevation of the family life will depend on how far each member of

it is earnestly seeking to be true to his own conscience and inward convictions. It is only so far as we are striving for ourselves to know more and more of truth, and to be faithful to its teachings, that we can exercise any influence on those around us. Be courageous on all occasions to your own ideas of what is true, right, and 'pure, and your influence and example will strengthen and elevate others, as real character and faithful action always do.

Whilst you claim the freedom of your higher nature because of your allegiance to God, remember that this is something very different from the assertion of self-will, which insists upon the right of doing wrong and foolish things merely for the gratification of pride or self-pleasing. This is only the claim of selfishness for unchecked indulgence. It is the lower nature, rising up to pass over the restraints which would hold it in check. The perfect surrender of self in loving loyalty to God and His laws, is the noble "liberty wherewith Christ makes us free."

There is one sad thought, which may sometimes intrude upon our home happiness, and that is when we remember that sooner or later every earthly home is dissolved, and passes away. This must be so, because of that grand law of God's

that nothing imperfect is to be final ; it has its fitness for the time, and therefore its ordination for the time, but it is only a stepping-stone on our constant progress onward to higher developments of life. If we lived for ever as children in our father's house, how narrow our thoughts and feelings would become ; how petty our interests, how scanty and meagre our experience ! We belong to a larger home than the home of our childhood, to a much larger family than that into which we entered at our birth. The world is our home ; the whole human family, of which God is the Father, are our brothers and sisters ; and we have in the future a wider, richer life to live in this great community, with its more varied interests, its further-reaching events, its deeper demands upon our sympathy and activity.

Every state in which God places us is, if we are true to its duties, a preparation for the next, to which He raises us. Home life prepares for the life of the world ; and the same qualifications are needed for living rightly and happily in it. Love for all the human family ; obedience to God, the Father and rightful Ruler ; contentment with all that He ordains for us ; the recognition of a common life and its duties and enjoyments ; the

maintenance of individual freedom and independence, founded on allegiance to God.

It is just as you are faithful to the relations and duties of your earthly home that you will grow in fitness for playing your part wisely and nobly in the world. And this, again, is a stepping-stone to a third home. Christ has told us that among the "many mansions" of God our Father He has chosen and prepared for us another Home, even as He once planned and prepared this world for our life here.

"This is the Home of future years,
Of sweet unseparating love,
The land of promise in the skies,
Our Father's House above.

"Yes, Home ! delightful thought, for there
Are many friends, once loved below ;
And forms with deathless beauty fair
Shall greet us when we go."

And even now, in our earthly homes, we are preparing for the heavenly just so far as we are trying to live a true life in faithful relation to our present conditions ; for the life of heaven is no more all singing and lounging, and pleasing and amusing ourselves, than our present home life should be. We must not think of heaven, of which our Blessed Lord is the Life and Centre, as

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merely a delightful escape from the pain and misery which others are enduring, and that its joys are rejoicings in abundance and ease, and freedom from care. The happiness of our heavenly home is just composed of the same elements as that of our earthly homes. Perfect, self-sacrificing love ; unswerving obedience ; entire content ; the joy of an unbroken union with all the wise and good ; the courage and independence of the seraph Abdiel—

“ With whom nor number nor example wrought
To swerve from truth.”

God grant to you all a happy, loving, obedient life in your homes this Christmas-tide ; and a noble useful life by-and-by in the great home of the world ; and at last a blessed entrance, through union with Christ, into the Home He has prepared for us in heaven.

“ And oh, blithe breeze ! and oh, great seas !
Though ne'er, the present parting o'er,
On this low plain we meet again,
Oh lead us to yon heavenly shore !

“ One port, methinks, alike we seek,
One purpose hold where'er we fare.
Oh, bounding breeze ! oh, rushing seas !
At last, at last, unite us there ! ”

II.

REST AWHILE.¹

TWO words, spoken by Christ to His disciples, are our farewell motto, with which we close this Term. And, in taking these with us, let us remember that not one word which fell from His lips is a meaningless, empty word ; each one expresses, or helps to express, some real thought, some true feeling, or some wise command.

The two words of our motto contain all these. There is in them an important suggestion for reflection, a gleam of tender sympathy, and a prudent injunction.

I. What is Rest? It is a cessation from work. We cannot rest without having first worked, and we rest in order to work again. The same Voice which bade the disciples "Rest awhile," says also, "Work while it is called to-day." The two commands are not a contradiction, but are the

¹ At the close of the Summer Term, 1888.

complement of one another. Rest is not another word for idleness. Idleness implies that entire inactivity which produces the weakness and decay of all our powers. Lethargy and sloth are steps towards death ; and this is no mere moral assertion, but a scientific fact. There are many instances in natural history where plants or animals, having given up the use of certain limbs or functions, actually lose them altogether. A striking example of this is afforded by the Nauplius, which is often tempted to leave off swimming in the water and catching its own food, to fix itself upon the hermit-crab, upon whose body it feeds in idleness. By degrees the six little feet, which it uses no longer, drop off, and soon all its organs disappear, and it degenerates into a senseless little bag, hanging on to the crab, with no individuality or distinct existence.

Precisely the same result follows in every part of our nature ; idleness is death. The "slothful servant," in our Lord's parable, hiding "that one talent, which 'twas death to hide," suffered in its being taken from him—only the inevitable result of a law which we cannot escape.

Work is life, and only when every faculty of mind and body are kept in due exercise, can we

grow in well-proportioned beauty, and approach that completion of the ideal, with its rich and many-sided life, which is God's design for us.

But whilst laziness and inaction cause the decay of our faculties, rest gives renewal and strength ; for rest generally means the exchange of one kind of employment for another ; and thus, while one set of functions ceases work for a while, others come into play, and so the harmonious development and use of all is maintained.

During the last three months the powers of your minds have been in busy exercise, and now the time has come to "rest awhile" from mental work ; but there are none of you for whom the prescription of perfect idleness has been required. You will pass from study of various kinds to holiday duties and pastimes, and these will engage other faculties of your many-sided nature, and set them in exercise.

You will now "rest awhile" from school work in loving attention to home demands, in the pleasures of society, tennis-parties, picnics, or in rambles along the seashore, or yachting on the blue waters ; in wandering over the heathery moors, or climbing the mountain-side among the green ferns or Alpine snows, enjoying to the full the delights of home

love and companionship, and living happy autumn days amid such scenes of nature as will often "flash upon that inward eye, which is the bliss of solitude." And this is Rest—not idleness, but change of occupation.

II. It is the voice of Christ which bids us work ; and when we fully realize this, what a dignity it adds to all the drudgery of labour, and what a stimulus and inspiration it is to promptness and diligence ! And now it is the same voice which bids us "rest awhile." Does Christ, then, care for our holidays, our play-time, our pleasures and amusements ? Certainly He does ; there is no part of our life that His wide sympathy and all-embracing view do not include. And why ? Because every part of a true life is essential to its completeness. Narrow minds do not see this. They either look upon recreation as a secular, frivolous thing, not recognized by God, and scarcely permissible, or they regard excitement and amusement as the pursuits of life, according to their grave or gay temperament. The sympathy of Christ with our whole human nature, and His deeper knowledge of all its needs, cause Him to feel more concern in our having our due amount of play and pleasure, than many men and women

show, who regard one part of the community as born to work, and another to idleness.

I want you to realize these holidays that it is at the command of Christ that you "rest awhile," in order that you may enjoy all these happy weeks the more from having the sense of His favour and presence with you in every recreation provided for you. He said to His disciples, "*Come, rest awhile.*" And He went with them into their little holiday sojourn among the quiet solitudes at the upper end of the lake. They spent the time of rest with Him, and it must have been a blessed, happy holiday. Many a holiday ends miserably in weariness and disgust. Why is this? Because it is used as a relapse into selfish indulgence. It is regarded as a time for casting off restraint, and rushing into vain dissipation, in which all collectedness and thought are lost. The delight with which parents welcome home their children changes sometimes, after a few weeks, into a feeling of relief that the holidays are over. The school-girls and school-boys have shown so little consideration for the other members of the family; they have paid so little regard to the household arrangements; they have been so bent upon pleasing themselves, and so exacting in their demands for recreations and

amusements, that when the day comes which carries them back to school, there is a general feeling of comfort and well-being throughout the household at home.

If you go home this vacation-time, as at the command of Christ, as having Him with you, you cannot thus relapse into heedless self-indulgence ; you will go to make others happy, not for mere selfish gratification ; you will remember that they who have been taking up the home duties and home cares will also enjoy the opportunity to rest awhile from these ; and you will strive, by sharing these, to lessen instead of adding to them.

III. Take the motto, "Rest awhile," as not only an individual but a general command, and do all you can to promote for Christ's sake its general observance. There are many of your fellow-creatures who have been working much harder, and for a much longer time, than you have done. And whilst you have been carrying on your work in the midst of beautiful and healthful surroundings, looking out upon green foliage, and the garden with its blaze of flowers, and breathing in through open windows, or beneath the shady trees, the sweet summer air, they have been toiling in close, heated streets, in foul atmosphere, and amidst

scenes too often made hideous by misery and sin. You have already helped some little ones to enjoy a fortnight's happy holiday in the country ; but do not think that you have now nothing to do but to enjoy yourselves. Keep constantly in mind that all need the holidays you love so well—servants, work-people, all with whom you have to do ; and endeavour, by thoughtful consideration and planning, to help in every way you can to give to others the pleasure you prize for yourselves. And if the refreshing cup of cold water, given for the love of Christ, is noticed and rewarded by Him, so also will be any efforts or sacrifices you may make to secure for others the observance of His kind and wise command, "Rest awhile."

IV. In our thoughtful reflections on these words of Christ, we must not neglect to notice the limitation of the injunction. He bids us *rest*, but only for *awhile*. Those whose school days are not yet over know well that the holidays will come to an end, and regular work begin for them again. And perhaps I need scarcely remind even those who are now leaving us, having completed their school course, that life is not one long summer-day's holiday ; we hope, indeed, that the lessons they have learned here have given them a higher sense

of the value and use of the time which now lies before them, than the anticipation of spending their days in selfish gratification. Remember Christ's words "Rest *awhile*," and before you drift into an idle, aimless life at home, plan for yourselves two things. First, some arrangement for keeping up a regular scheme of self-improvement, by engaging at stated times in some study or good reading. Get this settled with your parents as soon as you can conveniently. And, secondly, fix on some definite work for God, and be very careful to fulfil faithfully all the duties it may involve. In choosing this, consult with your parents and your clergyman. A good deal of time and zeal is often wasted in Christian work, because people do not quite know how to set about it, or how to choose exactly what they are best fitted for. The best work of the present day and the most successful is accomplished by organizations in which each one has his bit of work given to him, and then faithfully carries it out. Individual work, in which results depend upon the efforts of one person, leads often to disappointment, if it is unsuccessful; or to vain self-elation, if it should appear hopeful.

V. These holiday rests should remind us, every Term, of that last great coming home, which awaits

us when the education and training of this life are ended, and we return to our Father's House above. All the Term is, as you know, in a way, a preparation for a happy going home. The rejoicing with which you will enter your father's house will depend very much upon how you have maintained your home love, as your best and strongest affection, and upon how this has been to you a strong inspiration to diligence in every study and attention to every duty. Home happiness is home love, home harmony; and Heaven's happiness is the love of God, and harmony with God. Make all your life here a preparation for this.

“O God of saints, to Thee we cry !
O Saviour, plead for us on high !
O Holy Ghost, our Guide and Friend,
Grant us Thy grace till life shall end,
That we at length with Christ may rest
In that glad Home for ever blest !”

III.

EVERYTHING BEAUTIFUL IN ITS SEASON.¹

SOLOMON'S conception of human life is that of a very wide and deeply laid philosophy. He tells us, in the Book of Ecclesiastes, how he "gave his heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven." He studied human life in all its aspects, its laughter and its tears, its toils and its rest, its loves and its hatreds, its plantings and its rootings-up, its gains and its losses ; and then he draws this conclusion : "I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it ; and He hath made everything *beautiful in its time.*"

The wise man of Israel, who studied life three thousand years ago, arrived at the same conviction as far-seeing minds have reached in every nation and in every age ; great philosophers, great poets

¹ At the close of the Lent Term, 1889.

and dramatists, have all recognized the use and beauty, in their due proportion and fit season, of many things which narrower minds have misjudged and neglected, or condemned. But there is in the conclusion which Solomon reached more than the calm restfulness of a wide, philosophic outlook. He sees a use and a purpose running through and shaping human life, and he believes that the beauty and proportion which this gives to the great whole are the design and work of God. "There is a time to every purpose under the sun," because God hath "given the travail to the sons of men to be exercised in it;" and everything is beautiful, when it is done in its fitting season, because God has appointed it.

The more we exercise simple faith in God, the wider and more philosophic our minds will grow, and the better we shall understand life and its enigmas. Many a man, who has studied little beyond his Bible, has a wider conception of the beauty and fitness of things than the thinker recognizes, who shuts God out of the universe, as Creator and Ruler. It is not religion which in itself narrows the mind. Frivolity suggests that there is a time to laugh, a time to dance, a time to speak, a time of peace, and includes all of life

in these. Unbelieving despair sees only the time to die, the time to pluck up, the time to weep, the time to hate, and sighs, "Such is life!" But faith opens our eyes to see how the whole great scheme of things is designed and ordered by God, and how every element in it has its due purpose, place, and work.

In the composition of a great picture it is necessary to introduce a large variety of objects, but the perfection of the whole will depend entirely on the skill of the artist in assigning to each its due prominence and signification. Supposing a painter takes for a subject the death of Nelson, and places the dying hero in the background, while the front is filled with carefully drawn fragments of wood, ropes, cannon-balls, etc. Those would be proper materials to be introduced, but all sense of beauty would be lost by the want of proportion and fitness.

And thus it is in our own lives ; we must not shut out of them any of the true elements of life, but if we would make of these a perfect and beautiful whole, we must work on God's plan, and strive to give to each part only just its own due share of time. It is this sense of how all things are beautiful in their season which has so often made

poets feel as if life were like a grand piece of concerted music, the full chords of which include so many sounds, but by the choice and fitness of each, perfect harmony is obtained. Thus Milton, in his sonnet "At a Solemn Music," speaks of

"The fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, Whose love their motion swayed
In perfect diapason whilst they stood,
In first obedience and their state of good."

And Shakespeare—

"The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils."

We may not be able always to see the whole great design of our lives, and to work as if we ourselves were the artists. More frequently we have to do our part like the workers on the Gobelin tapestry, where one great artist draws the design, which is then cut into pieces and distributed among the different embroiderers. Each one has a little bit to do, and the place marked where to put in the stitches; but just as he faithfully does what he is told to do, so is the perfection of the whole, when at last all is accomplished.

We often call our earnest efforts to give each thing its due place and time by different

names; because we just work under direction, God Himself being the great Master-Artist. And so a little child may simply talk of "being good." And what is being good, but doing everything that is required, and at the right time? Or we may call this faithfulness to every demand made upon us by the honoured name of *Duty*; but just as we are steadfast to this sense of Duty, so far shall we consciously or unconsciously be working out the beautiful design of God for our lives.

And, again, we may only feel that we are striving to do the will of our Father Which is in heaven, humbly receiving all that He appoints for us, and following Christ as our Saviour and Master. And in doing this we shall still more fully live out the whole of God's ideal for us; for it will be a life of all-embracing love and many-sided sympathy, harmonious in the due proportion of all its elements, and at every season beautiful, because of its fitness to the time.

In the life of Christ, we have given to us a perfect picture, comprehensive and proportioned, in which all changeful phases of our many-coloured existence find their due representation. There is in Christ's life on earth the "time to be born" in the stable at Bethlehem; the "time

to die" upon the Cross at Calvary; the "time to sow" the seed of new truth; the "time to pluck up" the weeds of error; the "time to break down" the edifice of formalism and hypocrisy, and the "time to build up" the Christian Church; the "time to weep" beside the grave of Lazarus, and the time to join in the wedding festival; the "time to mourn" over Jerusalem, and the "time to rejoice" that the things hid from the wise and the prudent are revealed to babes; the "time to keep silence" in the face of insult and reviling, and the "time to speak" words of love and hope to the weary and heavy laden; "a time to destroy" false pride and self-complacency, and "a time to heal" the broken-hearted—"to everything a season and a purpose," and "everything beautiful in its time."

Now let us look at our own lives, and see how we may endeavour to make them rich and full and well proportioned. Time will not allow of our touching upon all those things which Solomon includes as true elements of life, and each of which has its time. We will only take four pairs of contrasts—weeping and laughter—keeping and casting away—work and rest—birth and death.

I. There is "a time to weep." Tears are the

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expression of feeling—not always of sadness, but of emotion. There are tears of sorrow, which we weep over our own trials, disappointments, and vexations: and there is a time for these; for when God sends us trouble, He means that we should mourn.

There is also a time “to weep with those that weep”—tears of sympathy, when we imagine what others are suffering, or have suffered, and weep for them. Such tears are none the less fitting, even if they are shed “o’er gentle Desdemona’s wrongs,” or any other fictitious tale of woe, because for the time imagination makes all things so real, that the same chord of feeling is touched as in the statement of an actual fact.

There is a time for those sad tears which, “from the depth of some Divine despair, rise to the heart and gather to the eyes,” when we see others pursuing a wrong course, fighting against God and their better selves. Such were the tears which Jesus shed when looking on Jerusalem, and He longed to gather her children together as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, but they would not.

There is a time, too, for the tears of repentance over our own sins, when we think of our

ingratitude to God, and our coldness and disobedience towards Him ; when we think of how little we have availed ourselves of all the blessing and help offered to us in Christ. This present season of Lent is a time above all others the most fitting for such deep and tender spiritual feeling as expresses itself in tears.

“And the eyes that cannot weep
Are the saddest eyes of all.”

There is “a time to laugh.” A time for that keen thrill of gladness, which rises into laughter, when we feel full of life and health, or when we have before us the prospect of some coming happiness—such as the holidays, and the reunion with those we love so well. Small things provoke this laughter ; indeed, it is ready to break forth upon no occasion at all. Yet it too has its season.

There is also a time for hearty, kindly laughter at little humorous incidents and characteristics, or at sallies of wit, merry stories, odd incongruities. Those who see and feel the pathos of human life have generally an eye for the humorous aspects of it.

But there are some kinds of laughter for which no time is appointed in God's great design for

a perfect life. There is no time or season when laughter at sacred or tender things is fitting or beautiful. The laughter of satire and sneering is always a jarring note in "the grand sweet song." The laughter of the "fools" who "make a mock at sin" is at all seasons a hideous discord clashing into the "perfect diapason."

.II. There is "a time to keep," a time to hold fast that which is good. Keep fast the information you have gained this Term. You will need a store of knowledge to enable you to form just conclusions and correct opinions about things when you come out into life, and have to act for yourselves.

This is especially a time to keep a firm grasp on those truths which relate to God and our relation to Him. Establish yourselves in the faith, by keeping in mind those evidences of the truth of Revelation which we have been studying; and yet more by the daily exercise in them of experience and practical action.

This is also especially a time to keep closely to the higher standard of life and conduct, of which God may have granted you glimpses from time to time. It is so easy to drift away from this, under the influence of any lower current, and

to yield inch after inch, till we scarcely see the difference between right and wrong.

There is "a time to cast away." The time has come to many of you, who are standing on the threshold of womanhood, to cast away childish things—little foolish ideas about life and its responsibilities, silly mistakes, false judgments in regard to character and conduct, petty desires and aims.

There is a time to cast away bad habits. Careless habits of speaking and acting; a habit of unpunctuality; lazy, indolent habits. All these grow upon us, and strengthen with their growth, so that, unless they are cast away in time, we become their very slaves.

III. There is a time to work. God has appointed to every one a time to work, and a time to rest from working; and has made each beautiful in its season. It is man who spoils and distorts life, by his artificial endeavours to make it a time for one-half only of the changes and contrasts necessary for its completeness and perfect proportion. We are constantly reminded of this, if we only look at the two extremes of society in London—the one half an idle, selfish existence of unceasing holiday; the other a long season of unceasing, ill-paid labour.

There is no life, perhaps, so healthful and promotive of our entire well-being as the school life of a diligent, conscientious pupil, with its constant alternations of regulated work and happy holidays ; and it is God Who has given you the blessings of education and home, and has made each so beautiful in its season.

But the school and the home are alike only for a season. "Days and moments, quickly flying," carry us on to the end of one Term after another ; and then the last comes, and school days are over. And the home, too,—that also only has its time. The elder generation passes away, brothers and sisters marry, and those

" Who grew in beauty side by side,
And filled one home with glee,
At last are severed far and wide,
By mountain, stream, and sea."

Think of this, not as a pathetic sentiment, but as a stimulus to an earnest endeavour to be true to school life and home life, each in its time, striving to accomplish God's design in work and rest, by making both beautiful in their season.

Look around you now at this happy Easter-tide, and see how the rest of winter was only a sleep, from which all nature arises refreshed with

new vigour to enter upon new work. Through all God's creation there is a time to work and a time to cease from working; and when you remember the calm repose of autumn, the silent, deep rest of winter, the gentle awakening of the springtime, and the exuberant life of the glorious summer days, you will feel how beautiful everything is in its season, and see how the perfection of life depends on our recognition of what belongs to every time, and the thorough giving of that time to its appropriate duties.

IV. All of human life is included in the next pair of contrasts. There is "a time to be born, and a time to die." We have all entered this world, and we must all go out of it. "The soul of man," said an old Saxon chief, "is like a little bird which flies through the window out of the darkness into the great hall. There he flits about a little while in the light and warmth; he hears the song and the laughter, and picks up the crumbs of the feast; then away he goes, out into the darkness again. And where is he?" There was a time when we came into the brightness and beauty of this world, with all its rich and varied life; we now are passing through it; and the time will come when we must leave it for another stage of existence.

What is it which makes this thought a sad one? It is the sense that our life in this world is out of tune with heaven. We look upon life as "a time to be born" into this world, shutting out the remembrance that there is "a time to die," and thus our lives are one-sided and incomplete. Christ has taken away the sting of death, and the "time to die" comes at the end of a life lived for God in Christ, as the sunset closes a day of work, "beautiful in its season." Such a death is only as the duly bringing home of a sheaf of corn, which has sprung up, grown, and matured in the appointed seasons, and at length in the harvest-time is carried fully ripe into the garner. Of such a "time to die" we can only speak in Milton's calm words—

" Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail,
Or knock the breast ; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame ; nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble."

May God help us to make our lives so complete in every part, that death may be only the fitting close to a stage of existence in which "everything" has been "beautiful in its season."

IV.

EVER LEARNING.¹

“EVER learning!” These words seem a most inappropriate motto for the end of the Term, when you are looking forward to putting away all books and studies, and bidding good-bye, for a while at any rate, to teachers and school associates.

But there are other kinds of learning besides that to which you have given much time and attention during the last three months, and you have other teachers besides those attached to the staff of the school. When you leave West Heath this week, you will have with you four teachers, from whom I want you to be learning all the holidays, and not for that time only, but throughout your whole lives.

Who are these teachers, who are ever with you, and from whom you must be “ever learning”?

I. YOUR SENSES. Seeing and hearing. The

¹ At the close of the Lent Term, 1890.

eye and the ear have been called the "gateways of knowledge"—open gates, through which enter unceasingly impressions from the outer world. Thousands of pictures are constantly formed on the retina of the eye, thousands of sounds enter the ear. One school of philosophy maintains that the senses are the teachers of all our knowledge ; and although there is much to be said for the opinion of Plato, that we bring with us into this world ideas of right and wrong, and a perception of the ideal, yet there is no question but that a great part of our training and culture is the result of an intelligent use of our senses.

Let your senses be your teachers this holiday-time ; and when you are taken to see picture-galleries, museums, and other "sights," or to hear lectures, or concerts of beautiful music ; or when you travel abroad, or take a country walk at home, or hear intelligent conversation in society,—strive to receive lessons of culture and taste, and to add to your stores of knowledge by the impressions received through the eye and the ear.

In order to learn fully all that the senses can teach us, we need to keep in lively exercise the faculties of *observation* and *attention*. Without observation we are partially blind, without attention we are

partially deaf; for sights and sounds may enter the ear, but never reach the mind, which alone can turn them into intelligence and use.

II. The second teacher which you have ever with you, and from whom you must be ever learning, is the HEART. By this I mean the feelings and affections; for, because emotion affects the action of the heart, it used to be supposed that it was the seat of feeling, as the brain is of thought.

Holidays are a season for listening to the lessons of this beautiful teacher, for we are giving the brain a time of rest, and home is the very sphere of the heart's teachings. It is here that we learnt our first lessons of love, in the cradle of our mother's arms; and every time that we return to our homes let us take up again these old lessons, and see what new teachings the heart has for us.

It may be that it will speak to you a little word of reproach, and tell you that you have sometimes come home from school full of selfish desires, and careless exuberant excitement, thinking only of the pleasures and indulgences which others are to provide for you, and nothing of what you are to do for them.

Listen to your heart, when it tells you to try to make others happy these holidays. There are

many ways in which you can carry out this lesson. Let your parents see your improvement in all that is good. This is the greatest joy of a parent ; and when you think of this, you will not allow yourself to fall into that silly way of talking, which is often now adopted, of pretending to be worse than you are, and more ignorant and foolish.

If you listen to your heart's promptings, it will teach you to give pleasure by your brightness and cheerfulness, and your hearty enjoyment of all that is going on at home. The home party naturally look to you to bring into the circle a new element of freshness, and to introduce new topics of conversation from the life of intellectual interest which you have been leading ; and while the heart imposes strict and honourable silence in regard to all personal gossip about your companions, there is much that is pleasant and enlivening which can be told of your school life and pursuits.

The heart is also the teacher of home obedience, and will prompt you to show respect and attention to your parents' wishes. At school, obedience is a part of the system and organization in which you live ; but at home it should be the prompt impulse of the heart. It is a question of

the feelings ; for nothing is more wounding to the affection of a father or mother than the evident reluctance of a child to conform to the parent's wishes and arrangements.

Sympathy, again, is a lesson which the heart alone can teach. It has been called the imagination of the heart ; because it enables us to feel for others, by fancying ourselves in their place. Those who never listen to this lesson of the heart have no thought or consideration for the feelings of others. They become hard, sarcastic, utterly regardless of the pain or injury they inflict, as long as they can amuse themselves or excite a laugh. That silence of love which the heart teaches will make you tender, charitable, pitiful—all that in a woman is most lovable and sweet.

III. While we take heed to the lessons of the heart, we have to remember that it cannot teach us all things ; and that sometimes, if we listen to it alone, it will lead us much astray. You have a third teacher always with you, to whose decisions you must often refer the impulses of emotion ; this is CONSCIENCE. What is conscience ? We know that it is a voice speaking within us, and that it is always a "strong siding champion" for right. But metaphysicians, or psychologists, can no more

give a decisive definition of conscience, than biologists can declare the origin of life. It is with us, we trace its effects, but we do not understand the mystery of its existence. Some have called it the *voice* of God speaking in the soul; but perhaps the best statement in regard to conscience is that it is the *witness* for God; some part of nature which still retains a likeness to God, and is still in harmony with God. It speaks a language on His side. It is heard in the heart, and it leads us to the grave. Often we hear its voice, when we are entering into the midst of our own thoughts and schemes; and sometimes it speaks of the plans we are forming.

Conscience is our teacher in the important matters. It teaches us to distinguish between right and wrong; it trains us to do right; it approves or condemns what we do.

Neither our senses nor our passions can give us the important distinction between right and wrong. The senses tempt to evil, and the passions excuse it. Listen to the full voice of conscience, and it will teach you what is evil, and cleave to that which is good. "Without conscience," says Macbeth, "we are all of us all;" but that is because

commit a fearful crime, and conscience made him tremble at the thought of its enormity. Conscience gives us courage for all right action ; and you will want this courage quite as much at home, and in society, as at school. The high tone of your home and your social circle will depend upon how far you are bravely steadfast to the higher ideal of purity and right, which conscience tells you is the true standard. If, through weakness or fear, you appear to approve and countenance what is wrong, your educating and refining influence as a woman is lost. Conscience is the witness for God within us, and His condemnation or approval of our conduct is a terrible moment when, after a course of folly or evil, the voice of conscience comes to us to see our conduct in its true light. Suddenly flashes upon us the truth and shame. The terrors and agonies of conscience are often agonies which human nature to endure. There is no sweeter joy than when the witness, speaks approval and others condemn them. Do not ever may think of con- but it is this voice of unspeakable

happiness, and for the sake of this joy men have been content to lose all besides. In the "Coming of Arthur" there is a beautiful little passage, where Bellicent, his sister, tells how Arthur (who in the allegory of the poem represents Conscience) came to her once, when she had been unjustly punished for a little fault of which she was not guilty:—

" And out I ran
 And flung myself down on a bank of heath,
 And hated this fair world and all therein,
 And wept, and wished that I were dead ;and he—
 I know not whether of himself he came,
 he was at my side
 And spake sweet words, and comforted my heart,
 And dried my tears."

IV. The heart is a higher teacher than the senses, and the conscience is more trustworthy than the heart; yet even conscience, though we may call it the witness for God within us, is only a part of ourselves, and as such its light is necessarily limited. It can answer none of our questions as to what we are, whence we came, and whither going. It incites us to seek God, but it cannot unveil Him to us. It bids us obey God, but it cannot fully reveal His will to us. It checks us from wrong and urges us to right; but it can only rouse the energy and strength which are our own; it cannot

supply us with any more than we possess. It accuses us of sin, but it leaves us under the shame and burden of past guilt. Conscience cannot forgive us, because it is only a part of our own moral nature, and has no objective authority. In the teaching of conscience we reach the limits of all that we can learn from ourselves ; and yet the soul is not filled, nor the heart satisfied. We yearn for further knowledge ; we want to see God in all His perfection, so that the heart may utterly love Him, the Highest. We want to know that He forgives and loves us ; we want some gracious assurance which shall overpower the terrible accusations of conscience in respect to past sin. We long for a power of spiritual life and moral energy which shall supplement our deficiency, and give us victories that in and from ourselves we dare not hope to win.

And where shall we find the teacher who can supply all the needs of our ignorance and weakness? In Christ, Who, again, is always with you, always near. As education carries us onward, we reach and pass beyond the measure of one teacher after another ; and even if study at college succeed that of school, the limits of the university may be attained ; but the more you learn of Christ, the more He is able to teach you, because

the boundaries of His teaching are not in Himself, but in your willingness and capacity to receive it.

The senses often mislead us ; the heart may be the source of foolish or wrong impulses ; the conscience may be so mistaken as to call evil good, and good evil ; all human teachers are liable to error, and when we have once relied on one whom we thought infallible, further ripeness in ourselves shows us how crude and ignorant was our trust. In the teaching of Christ we reach firm and solid ground ; we build our house upon a rock. In this time of intellectual strife and uncertainty, when the earthquakes of criticism and contempt for authority are tearing up many old foundations, hold fast to the teaching of Christ, be ever learning of Him. On one occasion, when many of Christ's disciples were shaken in their belief in Him, because the scribes and lawyers questioned, doubted, or rejected Him, He turned to those who were still following Him, and asked, "Will ye also go away?" To which Peter gave the brave reply, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

The teaching of Christ is in advance of the most advanced opinions of the present century, and is

an answer to the questions of the highest intellect ; and yet He is the Teacher of the youngest, the most backward, the least clever of all, who like Samuel say, "Speak, Lord ; for Thy servant heareth."

Be "ever learning" of Christ. Every day come to Him in prayer for light and guidance. Study His teaching in the Gospels. Look up to Him continually through the day for help and direction, in every difficulty, in every temptation. Thus you may learn these holidays such great lessons of truth and life as shall raise all your character and conduct, and help you to shine forth as God's lights in the world.

The farewells that close this Term are now at hand, and for some of you we sadly remember that it means farewell to your school days at West Heath.

What shall be the last words that we ask you to take with you? Not words of mine, nor of any other teacher who has assisted in your education here, although we one and all, I rejoice to say, unite in giving them to you as our parting thoughts ; they are the words of Christ, spoken as He looked in love over the ignorant, perplexed world of human thought and life : "*Come unto Me ;*" "*Learn of Me.*"

V.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.¹

WE meet together this evening for the last time this Term ; and as I look over the faces before me, an unusual gleam of light seems to brighten them all. What is the source of this light ? It is no transient brilliance, caused by unwonted excitement ; it is a ray of joy from a true enduring source, even from that deep, eternal love of God our Father, which provided for us that we should be born into happy English homes, and which also sent His own Son into the world, to enter and dwell in a blessed human home. These two thoughts are so intertwined in the anticipation of CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS, that they combine to make this time one of special brightness. Let us think a little this evening of that home in which Christ spent more than thirty Christmas days, the anniversaries of His birth ; a home chosen by God for His Son, and therefore in some respects an ideal home. We

¹ At the close of the Autumn Term, 1889.

will endeavour to picture to ourselves its situation, its inmates, and try also to form some idea of what He was in those early years as a child, a youth, a son, a brother.

For the home itself, it had three great advantages, which are characteristics of an ideal home—it was a country home ; a home of simplicity ; and a home of industry.

It was situated in the midst of beautiful and natural surroundings. "Nazareth," we are told, "lies embosomed among green rounded hills, from the summits of which views are obtained of some of the most lovely and interesting parts of Palestine. In the north is seen the snowy peaks of the Hermon range ; in the west, the deep blue line of the Mediterranean, broken only by the rugged height of Mount Carmel ; on the south and south-east stretches the broad plain of Esdraelon, the scene of so many remarkable events in Jewish history." Often must Jesus, as a boy, have looked out over this scene of beauty, and felt the influence of it upon His mind and heart.

Nazareth also is a very land of flowers. The very flowers that we love to gather abound in the fields round Nazareth—daisies, anemones, bluebells ; and later on, the scarlet poppy, wild roses, geraniums,

pimpernel, and the gay Syrian lily. Often must the eyes of Jesus have rested with delight upon these, as the thought arose in His heart that Solomon, in all the decorations and embroideries of artificial splendour, was not arrayed in such real loveliness as the flowers of the field. It is an added blessing in a home, rich in other sources of happiness, if it is situated in the midst of beautiful natural surroundings, and we grow up—

“Not with the mean and vulgar works of men,
But with high objects, with enduring things,
With life and nature—purifying thus
The elements of feeling and of thought,
And sanctifying, by such discipline,
Both pain and fear; until we recognize
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.”

The second thing we notice in the home chosen by our Lord on earth, is that it was a home of simplicity. There is nothing to indicate that the home at Nazareth was a home of beggary and destitution. These are the results of idleness and vice. Joseph had his trade, and is always mentioned as well known in connection with it. The journeys with his wife and family to Jerusalem every year for the feasts, and the offering made by Mary of the doves, rather than the meal, given by the very poor, all prove that the home of Christ

was one supplied with the fitting necessities of life, although nothing would be spent for self-indulgence, luxury, or display.

Thirdly, it was a home of activity. Joseph, well known as the carpenter of Nazareth, would be busy in his workshop. Mary, and those who are called the sisters of Jesus, would be occupied with the work of the household, which in Jewish families included spinning and the weaving of cloth, and the making of this into garments for the family. All Jewish boys learned some trade, and Christ was taught that of Joseph; for we find that, in after-years, Jesus was known in Nazareth as the Carpenter, the Workman, Who from a boy had been seen at work in Joseph's shop, and Who had made and mended many a thing for the households of Nazareth.

Let us now see who were the inmates of Christ's home on earth. At the head of the family was Joseph. He is especially characterized as a *just* man. We hear little more of him than this; but oh, how much is wrapped up in that little word of four letters; and how rare is the character which can be truly emphasized as *just!* What is it to be just? It means utter truth, kindness, sympathy, joined with intelligence, reason, good sense; one

who was not the slave of prejudice and passion—
“who revered his conscience as his king; who
spake no slander, no, nor listened to it.”

And what can we say of Mary—she who has
been for eighteen hundred years the very ideal of
womanhood? Rightly have poets and painters
and devout thinkers seen in her the highest type
of woman. She stands out as a woman approved
of God; the angel Gabriel says to her, “Thou hast
found favour with God,” “Blessed art thou among
women.” Let us see what were those characteristics
in her which won for her God’s approval, as well
as the admiration of those human minds who are
the most capable of seeing in what the perfect
beauty of the ideal consists.

One of the first things that strikes us in the
character of Mary is her perfect simplicity. There
is no kind of assumption of superiority, no attempt
to exalt herself. Of all the women of the world
who have occupied the most prominent positions
as rulers of states or queens of society, none has
ever risen so high in honour or has been so
universally distinguished, as Mary of Nazareth.
Her fame has endured through more than eighteen
hundred years, and is as high to-day as when the
angel said to her, “Blessed art thou among women;”

yet we never find her attempting to gather around her any circle of admirers, or to demand the homage and service of others. There is no striving to act the part of a distinguished woman, no attempt to produce effects. After the birth of her Son Jesus, with all the wonders which accompanied it, she returns to her quiet life of daily duty at Nazareth, where she lives her simple woman's life of wife and mother. Humble, pure in heart, and full of confiding trust, she looks up to God to appoint all her life for her.

To the refined beauty of her distinctively feminine qualities she unites a mind capable of poetic imagination and expression, as the *Magnificat*, her song of praise, abundantly proves; and she also shows a store of knowledge of the history, laws, and prophecies of her nation. We know that she possessed that rare and most valuable mental quality of *thoughtfulness*, which consists in taking things into the mind, allowing them to produce their due impression, and carefully reflecting on them, instead of lightly skimming over the surface of everything, flying from this to that, and losing one impression as soon as another is produced. We are told "Mary *kept* all these things, and pondered them in her heart."

We find frequent mention in the New Testament of the brothers and sisters of the Lord ; and though there is a difference of opinion as to who these persons were, we are justified in believing that they grew up with Him in the home at Nazareth, sharing with Him the love of Joseph and Mary, and the home training and instruction. The names of four brothers are given us—James, Joses, Simon, and Jude. Of these, James is the best known. His Epistle shows him to be shrewd, sensible, and practical ; and, like Joseph, he too was distinguished by the name of the “Just.”

In the centre of this family group we see the figure of the Holy Child. There are no rays of glory round His head to distinguish Him from the rest of the family ; He assumes no place as leader and director of the others ; He claims no position of superiority, demands no outward show of respect, no special attentions and service. He came to minister to others, not to be waited on ; and He did not expect or allow others to be ministering to Him. We know that His position in the family circle at Nazareth was precisely that of the other brothers and sisters, for in after-years His brothers thought His fame strange, and that He had no claim to teach anything in opposition to the

Pharisees : and they, with His mother, endeavoured to stop His work ; while His townfolk rejected Him. They could not believe that Jesus, Who had gone in and out among them, Who had lived and worked, grown up and played among them, could be also He Whose Name is Wonderful.

And yet all hearts loved Him, for the beauty of the youthful Jesus was the Divine beauty of a perfect humanity ; and

“ We needs must love the Highest when we see it.”

As a child He was a perfect child, not a child imitating older life and attracting attention by being precocious. This is anything but a perfect type of childhood. As a youth He was the ideal of youth, not a premature assumption of manhood, which is simply a departure from the perfect type.

S. Luke sketches with a few touches what Jesus was in His early days at Nazareth, and as we read these it is very interesting to remember that S. Luke collected the materials for his Gospel during his visit with S. Paul to Jerusalem, when he was in constant intercourse with James the Lord's brother, who was then the head of the Church at Jerusalem, and with Mary the mother of Jesus.

He tells us, "And Jesus *grew*, and *waxed strong in spirit*; increased in *wisdom* and *stature*, and in *favour* with God and man. And He dwelt with Joseph and Mary in Nazareth, and was subject to them."

Growth and increase of stature are specially mentioned, and indicate physical vigour and energy; and the whole of the life of our Lord in after-years shows that He possessed great bodily strength and power of endurance. The ideal youth is not of that sickly, weakly type which is sometimes wrongly associated with goodness.

Then we are told, "He waxed strong in spirit." This implies vigour of intellect, force of character, energy of will, and moral courage. No greater mistake can be made than the idea that to do right is a sign of weakness of character. Your life here teaches you that it requires more courage and strength to be true to your convictions of what is right, than to drift along with the stream into every wrong habit or opinion which may be prevalent at the time. Jesus as a youth had that noble independence which is bold to speak and act, and brave to endure.

Then He was filled with wisdom. Not the appearance of wisdom which we find in an old

head set on young shoulders. But we must never forget that there is a wisdom which belongs to the true ideal of *youth*, as there is a folly which is common to *every* age. A foolish child becomes a foolish girl, a foolish woman ending in a foolish old age ; for age brings no ripeness of wisdom to folly. Jesus increased in wisdom as He passed upward from a child to manhood ; but the wisdom began even in childhood, or it could not increase. What is this wisdom which belongs to the ideal type of humanity even in childhood ? It consists, I think, of three things—observation, thoughtfulness, and love. It is simply the *right* use of the senses, the mind, and the heart ; and the wrong use of these is *folly*. It begins, therefore, with the first dawn of life. By careful observation Jesus saw things as they really are, and was not led astray by appearances. By thoughtfulness He learned to form right judgments of things, and to say and do just the right thing ; to avoid rash statements, false exaggerations, and foolish assertions. Through the love of others He learned to understand and sympathize with them, which is the wisdom of the heart. He saw where to make excuses and where to rouse and strengthen. It was a wise love, not a weak devotion ; a love

which rose high above all blindness and folly, and which was strong to raise and help others toward their best life. Obedience is another characteristic of the youthful Jesus. Strong, courageous, wise in mind and heart, always seeing more truly than Mary and Joseph could do, He was yet *subject* to them. There is something beautiful and engaging in the unquestioning obedience of a little child, who believes his father and mother know everything ; but there is something more beautiful and noble in the self-controlled obedience, which is the result of a high sense of duty.

“Great souls,” says Carlyle, in his “Heroes and Hero-Worship,” “are always loyally submissive, reverent to what is over them ; only small mean souls refuse to obey, because they are jealous of authority. Loyal obedience is the true sign of the heroic soul.”

We are not surprised to read of Jesus in His youth, that He “increased in favour with God and man.” God saw in His Son at that age the very perfection of humanity, in its fresh prime, its loveliest season. Jesus now represented just what God intended all youth to be ; and in Him the Father saw the perfect fulfilment of His thought for the children of men.

And others recognized, too, the loveliness of this fair ideal ; for none, perhaps, are so lost and degraded by sin that they cannot admire and love the highest when they see it. Jesus won the favour and love of all ; not by seeking popularity, but simply by fulfilling the perfect ideal of what God designed all to be. Let us trust more to the power of what we *are*. People do recognize and admire goodness, nobleness, sweetness ; and the nearer we approach this ideal which Christ perfectly fulfilled, the more we shall gather to us that love which we are, perhaps, anxious to win, and may be seeking for in false ways. What must that home have been with such an inmate ; how blessed, how happy ! How sweetly life must have passed in such companionship ! No jarring notes of rudeness, misunderstanding, or ill-natured criticism to break the heavenly music of the home life at Nazareth.

If the brothers and sisters of our Lord were the children of Joseph by a first marriage, then Jesus must have been the youngest of that family circle ; yet what an influence for good must His character have been upon all the rest ! How the other inmates of this home must have looked back in after-years upon their early days in Nazareth ; and have felt how precious had been those years, and

how much they owed of all that was good, to the influence of that one perfect life among them !

What Jesus was in His home at Nazareth, you may all be. He was only just what God designs all young people to be. He was only what God calls you to be. He was only what He can and will help you to be in your own homes now. God is your Father ; Jesus is your elder Brother. You all belong to the great family of God, of which Jesus too, by His humanity, is also a member. You may think that He was at that time more like a grown-up man than a young person, with all the feelings and temptations of youth. If He was, He was not a perfect child, an ideal youth ; but He came to fulfil the Divine idea at every age, and He calls on you now to be, not a mature grown-up Christian, but only what He was Himself at your age, in His home with His parents, and among His brothers and sisters. Do you wish to be like Him at this age ; to be this great blessing in your own homes these Christmas holidays ; to bring this joy to your parents' hearts by your love and obedience ; to be this help to your brothers by your purity, courage, and sweetness ; to be an influence among your sisters by your observant and thoughtful wisdom ?—then ask Christ to abide with you, to dwell in you.

S. Paul, speaking as a man, says, "Nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And Christ will live in you, not as forming in you the ideal of the grown-up Christian, fighting in the world, but He will live in you as the perfect type of youth ; the ideal of the daughter, the sister, in the home life. He will be in you, and will make you to be what He was in His early days in His home at Nazareth. You will bear His image, not as it is represented to us in His public life, teaching the multitudes, doing miracles, suffering the scorn and hatred of the Pharisees, but as He was with Joseph and Mary, with His brothers and sisters, with His companions in the synagogue school, with His teachers, and any in authority over Him.

For some of you this is your last Term at school. Last words sometimes cling to us when others have slipped away, or have been cast aside. The last impression retains sometimes its vividness when others have faded. Carry with you the image of Christ in His home at Nazareth, and keep it before you as an ideal which He can help you to reach ; and may it so dwell with you, that you may never rest satisfied until you find your true life and joy in being like Him.

There is one more thought for us all. The home at Nazareth only endured for a few years. Jesus left it, as all men must leave their early homes, for His work in the world ; and when this was "finished," He ascended to the throne of His Father in heaven. Joseph died ; Mary went to live in Jerusalem with John, the beloved friend of Christ ; James became the Bishop of Jerusalem ; the sisters, no doubt, married ;—and thus the old home, once so happy and blest, was no more. It must be so with all earthly families.

"We leave the well-beloved place,
Where first we gazed upon the sky ;
The roofs, that heard our earliest cry,
Will shelter one of stranger race.

"Our father's dust is left alone,
And silent under winter snows ;
There in due time the woodbine blows,
The violet comes ;—but we are gone."

And yet we need never feel homeless ; for the same Love which provided for us our happy earthly homes, has prepared for us an eternal home in heaven. "Whosoever shall do the will of God," Jesus says, "the same is My brother, My sister, and mother"—members of His family, to dwell with Him in that blessed home. May God unite us there !

